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CONFIDENTIAL.

(9618.)

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FURTHER CORRESPONDENCE

RESPECTING THE

AFFAIRS

OF

ASIATIC TURKEY AND ARABIA.

[In continuation of Confidential Paper No. 9548.]

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CONFIDENTIAL.

Further Correspondence respecting the Affairs of Asiatic Turkey and Arabia.

[In continuation of Confidential Paper No. 9548.]

[36404] No. 1.

Messrs. Sassoon and Co. to Foreign Office.—(*Received October* 1.)

9, *Fenchurch Avenue, London,*
September 30, 1909.

Sir,

WE have the honour to inform you that we are interested in a British syndicate, the object of which is to acquire from the Turkish Government the fleet of river steamboats now plying between Bussorah and Bagdad, and generally to obtain a concession for running a line of steam-ships on the Tigris and (or) Euphrates Rivers.

We venture to hope that the syndicate may receive the moral support of His Majesty's Government to enable the matter to be brought to a successful issue.

We have, &c.

E. D. SASSOON AND Co.

[36531] No. 2.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Lowther.

(No. 674.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Foreign Office, October* 1, 1909.

TIGRIS and Euphrates navigation.

Mr. Lynch's concession. See your telegram No. 332 of the 23rd September.

I understand that to-morrow the Council of Ministers will come to a decision. Lynch is anxious to resist the provision granting Turkish Government option for the purchase of exclusive rights after a certain period. You should secure the removal of this condition if possible, and, if not, stipulate that the period be one of not less than forty years. In any case, the matter should now be settled as quickly as possible, and you should support Colonel Picot as far as you can.

[36577] No. 3.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(*Received October* 2.)

(No. 336.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, October* 2, 1909.

LYNCH concession. Please refer to your telegram No. 674 of yesterday.

I hope that the matter may be settled by the 4th instant. I have endeavoured, in communicating with the Minister of Public Works and the Porte on this subject, as it appears to me that this is the "moment psychologique," to urge upon them that the question should be decided without delay. I have represented that it would not be possible to draft a satisfactory clause providing for the eventual buying up of the

company's exclusive rights by the Government. The Minister of Public Works is, as I was privately informed yesterday, inclined to replace the repurchase clause by one providing that the company's monopoly should after seventy-five years become a Government one, compensation being given to the company.

[36578] No. 4.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 3.)

(No. 337.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, October 2, 1909.*

LYNCH concession.

Referring to my telegram No. 336 of to-day, the final official proposal made by the Minister of Public Works is as follows. His Excellency states his readiness to sign the convention, provided that an arrangement on these lines is agreed to:—

The Government to have the right after a period of thirty-seven and a-half years of withdrawing the company's exclusive rights without giving them any compensation, and of then opening the rivers to the navigation of Ottomans in general as well as to the company.

After a period of seventy-five years the Turkish Government to have the right—(1) on buying up the properties of the company at an expert valuation, to create a Government monopoly; (2) to throw the rivers open to the Turkish flag, whilst still including the company.

I have been given to understand that the present proposals, based on an extension of term, are acceptable from a business point of view, and the idea is that the compensation clause is made up for by this extended term. As the local press is now showing some interest in the question, and may thus embarrass the Ministers, I venture to suggest that Lynch be urged to come to a decision without further delay.

[36600] No. 5.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 4.)

(No. 777.)
Sir, *Constantinople, September 23, 1909.*

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith a despatch from the acting vice-consul at Adana reporting on the sentences pronounced on various Armenians in connection with the recent massacres.

I have, &c.
GERARD LOWTHER.

Inclosure in No. 5.

Acting Vice-Consul Chafy to Sir G. Lowther.

(No. 6.)
Sir, *Adana, September 15, 1909.*

WITH reference to your Excellency's telegram of the 11th instant requiring facts as to the reported condemnation to death of five Armenians, I had the honour of replying telegraphically that, as far as I was able to gather, the report must refer to sentences passed by the court-martial sitting at Erzin. Reports here put the number of condemnations at five, and the patriarchal delegates informed me that they had official information of their truth, that the Patriarchate was interesting itself in the matter and had secured a temporary delay in the execution of the sentences.

As the condemned are presumably imprisoned at Erzin, it is difficult to obtain accurate information here. As far as I have been able to ascertain from unofficial sources the sentence may refer to three Armenians of Hajin and an Armenian of Dortyol.

Of the former a certain Hrand Pilikian (or, according to another version, Karekian Ajemian and a shepherd named Hanessian) at the time of the siege of Hajin killed a Circassian chief named Arslan Bey on his refusal to lay down his arms and the discharge of the same.

A sub-lieutenant named Teber, described as a noted reactionnaire and one of the

provokers of the attack on Hajin, is reported to have been killed under identical circumstances by the said Hrand Pilikian, or Karekian Ajemian.

The same account is given of the killing of a gendarme by Krikor Hotzorian and Zadik Chikhrikian at Hajin.

With regard to the killing of an Armenian spy at Dortyol, it is stated that an Armenian named Mihran Dermilkonian is in prison wrongfully charged with the deed.

Two Armenian shepherds are also said to be in detention in connection with the killing of Musulmans at the village of Gurlashian.

This information is from an Armenian source, and the facts are probably coloured in favour of the accused.

I questioned Kenan Pasha and the vali in this connection, but both professed to be ignorant of details, while supposing the sentences to have been passed by the court-martial at Erzin.

In my telegram to your Excellency referred to, I stated that the report of the condemnation to death of forty Musulmans in the vilayet of Adana is probably true. The names of the murderers at the village of Abdoglou, including a certain Kibaran oglou and his brother, are published in the papers as condemned to death. The vali told me that some more executions are to take place in Adana, and Ismail Fazil Pasha informed me some time ago that a fairly large number of culprits were still to suffer the death penalty.

The sentences passed on the late vali (Ferik), Abdul Kader, and Ihsan Fikri, practically identical with those which I had the honour of wiring to your Excellency, are now published in the newspapers, and I fancy that news as to the sentences passed here, though possibly unofficial, is generally obtainable in Constantinople sooner than in Adana.

I believe the late vali is shortly to be removed from Adana. No official news as to any of the sentences referred to above has yet been published here, and I do not know whether the executions will be deferred till after the month of Ramazan.

I have, &c.
R. E. W. CHAFY.

[36601] No. 6.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 4.)

(No. 778.)
Sir, *Constantinople, September 23, 1909.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 777 of to-day, I have the honour to forward herewith a despatch from the acting vice-consul at Adana, reporting on the release of the three refugees from the British vice-consulate on their acquittal by court-martial.

I have, &c.
GERARD LOWTHER.

Inclosure in No. 6.

Acting Vice-Consul Chafy to Sir G. Lowther.

(No. 7.)
Sir, *Adana, September 15, 1909.*

I HAD the honour on the 11th instant to inform your Excellency telegraphically of the acquittal and release of our three remaining refugees.

The men, showing unmistakable signs of their incarceration, paid me a visit the day after their release, and desired me to convey to your Excellency the expression of their sincere gratitude for the British protection afforded them.

My private opinion is that it was this protection, united with a desire on the part of the Turks to please the English and make a good impression by a cheap show of justice only costing them the liberty of three Armenians, which really secured their acquittal.

The men gave me some account of their trial and imprisonment. The former, if correctly reported, appears to have been conducted on somewhat extraordinary lines. The prisoners appeared less than half a dozen times before the tribunal and more than a month seems to have elapsed between their final appearance and the evening when the director of the prison suddenly appeared with the laconic message that they were free. The men's recent apprehension as to their fate, as reported to your Excellency

in my despatch No. 4 of the 8th September, is a proof of their entire ignorance of the impending happy ending of their adventure.

Kenan Pasha, on whom I paid a formal call of thanks for his good faith towards us, told me himself that the prisoners were released as the result of a lengthy discussion between the members of the court the day before, and he seemed still to be quite uncertain as to whether they are innocent or guilty.

Zacharia Bizdikian, the spokesman of the party, a man of enlightened views, acquired during a residence in the French-speaking countries, said that they personally had been well treated during their confinement, but gave a most lurid description of the torture and ill-treatment of other Armenian prisoners. He assured me that the facts set forth by Arslanian in the deposition, a translation of which I had the honour of submitting to your Excellency last week, are perfectly true. He corroborated the very unfavourable description given by Arslanian of a certain head Mustantik named Zilfo (wrongly translated by me as "Relifi"), and gave the blackest account of Ahmed Bey, late commandant of gendarmerie at Adana.

As for the actual accusations made against the men, according to their account they severally collapsed, and I should suspect that the final discussion referred to by Kenan Pasha took the form of a debate as to whether Arslanian's deposition should be regarded as a final proof in favour of the prisoners or not, but of this I have no certain knowledge.

I think there is no doubt in any case that the acquittal was a just one.

Zacharia Bizdikian is leaving for Constantinople this week, and should your Excellency be inclined to accord him the honour of an interview, he would be proud to express his thanks in person, and supply any further information of possible interest to the embassy.

The following six Armenian prisoners detained in connection with the massacres were acquitted by the court-martial under the presidency of Kenan Pasha, and released about the same time as the three refugees:—

Roupen Geukderelian; Peniamine Geukderelian; Artino Gandjik; Sarkis Khatcho, of the village of Abdoglou; and Hanne Toughladjian.

I have, &c.
R. E. W. CHAFY.

[36602]

No. 7.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 4.)

(No. 779.)

Constantinople, September 23, 1909.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith a despatch from the British vice-consul at Adana reporting on the progress of events there and the reforms of the new vali.

I have, &c.
GERARD LOWTHER.

Inclosure in No. 7.

Acting Vice-Consul Chafy to Sir G. Lowther.

(No. 8.)

Adana, September 15, 1909.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to submit the following items of news concerning changes in the vilayet of Adana and the progress of the new vali's reforms and relief measures:—

The gendarmerie here is undergoing a process of reorganisation under Djemal Bey's personal supervision. Several new gendarmerie officers have arrived, apart from Loutfi Bey, who was appointed commandant some time ago, and seems to be a capable and intelligent officer. Signor Lodi, an Italian, has taken up his duties as inspector of gendarmerie. The rank and file of the force are being individually overhauled, and those pronounced physically or mentally unfit eliminated. A gendarmerie school is to be opened in Adana on the Macedonian model.

A new director of police has arrived from Macedonia.

The reorganisation of these forces should have the best effects in restoring law and

order throughout the province, and their establishment on an efficient footing will no doubt hasten the removal of martial law.

Orders have arrived in Adana to enroll Christians liable for military service.

Several changes have recently been effected in the personnel of the konak. Hussein Bey, the new dragoman of the vilayet, an ex-Young Turkish exile, is an intelligent and agreeable official of enlightened views. The freshly appointed maktubji is a gentlemanly and cultivated young man of about 25, who contributes to some of the modern newspapers.

The vali himself and Mehmed Ali Bey, the military commandant, honour me with their personal friendship, and make me the medium for the expression of their pronounced pro-British sympathies. The latter reads Kipling.

The great advantage to us of appointments of this kind is that they render possible the efficient discharge of business arising between the consulate and the konak through a medium of personal friendships, without recourse to the old-fashioned and wearing methods of "bluff" and tiresome official formalities.

The vali is displaying a military deliberateness in disposing his own picked men in subordinate positions throughout the vilayet. He informs me that Essad Reouf Bey, Mutessarif of Mersina, is to act in a similar capacity at Moush, his place being taken by a certain Leon Effendi, a Greek of Aleppo, who formerly acted as assistant governor at Smyrna, and, according to report, was at one time mumayin at Adana.

I did not enquire the reason of this change, but I gathered that it implies no disgrace for Essad Bey, who is, indeed, a most excellent official of advanced ideas, who was instrumental in preventing a massacre at Mersina and more recently a boycott.

The vali is alive to the danger of defective sanitary conditions in the city at the break up of summer, and is charging the municipal sanitary inspector to prepare a report of the conditions and needs under this head.

The Government relief measures are progressing satisfactorily so far, though it is too early to judge of their final success.

I propose to submit to your Excellency by the next mail a translation of the printed Turkish report of the Government relief committee, the first of a series which the vali rightly recognises the propriety of issuing.

In my capacity of member, I have attended several meetings of the Financial Commission, which have so far been mainly concerned with the signing by the members of orders for the issue of sums already voted by the General Commission.

All the refugees who passed the summer under canvas in the big camp have now been housed in dwellings repaired by the international relief committee.

Plans for the building of a new quarter outside the city are in preparation, and a fine site has already been provisionally chosen for the purpose.

An orphanage, to contain 1,000 children of both sexes, is to be built here, and to be placed under a strictly Ottoman direction. This scheme will probably not be realised without friction with the representatives of the Armenian Churches, though so far the patriarchal delegates here appear to be in harmony with the idea.

Mme. Zabel, an Armenian lady working under the auspices of the patriarchate, proposes to open an industrial institute in Adana to provide work for 100 widows, always provided the necessary funds are forthcoming from some source other than Armenian.

The vali recognises the great difficulties implied by the word "reconciliation," but there is no doubt that his determined and broad-minded attitude and personal tact and charm of manner are in the right way towards restoring some degree of confidence and sense of hope and security among the Christian population.

The preacher in a Greek church last Sunday emphasised to his congregation the harmfulness of useless retrospect, and the importance of looking with hope to the dawning of a brighter era in the future. Words of this nature uttered by a Christian priest are clearly traceable to the new vali's influence.

I have not yet been able to detect anything in Djevad Bey's attitude likely to offend Moslem susceptibilities to a dangerous degree, but this is a ground of extreme difficulty of penetration, and time alone can show the full effects of this experiment in Young Turkish military provincial administration.

I have, &c.
R. E. W. CHAFY.

[36603]

No. 8.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 4.)

(No. 780)

Therapia, September 23, 1909.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith an extract from an article published in the "Tasvir-i-efkiar" of the 20th instant discussing the present international position of Persia. The writer advocates the revision of existing treaties between Persia and Turkey, and considers that a new Anglo-Russian agreement should be concluded, to which Turkey should be a party, for securing not the partition, but the future welfare of her neighbour. The views expressed at the end of the article as to the necessity of Turkey keeping order on the frontier are apparently not at present shared in Persia, for on the same day on which the article appeared the Persian Ambassador here was making fresh protests at the Porte with regard to Turkish encroachments and the establishment of telegraph lines in purely Persian territory.

I have, &c.

GERARD LOWTHER.

Inclosure in No. 8.

Extract from the "Tasvir-i-efkiar" of September 21, 1909.

IN the present article the writer, who has already communicated a number of letters from Tehran to this paper, *inter alia* condemns England for playing into the hands of Russia in the north of Persia in a manner that will enable that country to reinforce her political by an economic predominance there. England, however, is free in the South, and, though in a less degree than Russia, can assure her influence and her commerce. The writer thinks that both these countries ought to be politely reminded that there is a third State contiguous to Persia, and that this State is no longer a cipher. There should be a new agreement, not directed towards the partition of Persia, but to securing her future welfare, and Turkey should be a party to it. If Persia is closed to Turkey when the railway to Bagdad is completed, Turkey will be like a man beating his head against a wall. The treaties between Turkey and Persia need revision. Doubtless the new Persian Government realises Turkey's good-will and the existence of common interests, and will not create difficulties and repent the mistake of having recourse to Russia and England in connection with trifling difficulties. The writer concludes by urging the necessity of Turkey taking the lead in keeping order on the frontier, not expecting too much of Persia, and promoting her economic interests in that country.

[36606]

No. 9.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 4.)

(No. 783.)

Therapia, September 25, 1909.

Sir,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 743 of the 14th instant, concerning the concession for railways in Anatolia, which has been applied for by Mr. Glasgow, I have the honour to transmit to you herewith a translation of the Decree of the Senate, which regulates the action of the Ministry of Public Works in granting such a concession, and which appeared at last in the "Official Gazette" of the 14th instant. You will perceive that after confirming the rejection of the Bill by which it was proposed to grant the concession out and out to Mr. Glasgow, it proceeds to recapitulate the main lines of the contract, and then authorises the executive to negotiate with whatever company might offer the best terms, the grant of a concession on those lines.

I have, &c.

GERARD LOWTHER.

Inclosure in No. 9.

Extract from "Takvim-i-vekai" of the 1st (14th) September, 1909.

DECREE OF THE SENATE CONCERNING RAILWAY CONSTRUCTION IN ANATOLIA.

THE following is a copy of the Decree drawn up by the Senate in accordance with a discussion which took place in the Chamber of Deputies, and, on a request for its being put into execution, sanctioned by Imperial Iradé, concerning a concession for the construction and working of railways in certain places in Anatolia without guarantees from present and fixed revenue, but on condition of profiting by the discovered and undiscovered mines.

There has been transmitted to the Bill Committee of the Chamber of Deputies a Bill consisting of a single article, drawn up by the Ministry of Public Works and studied and modified by the Council of Ministers, containing a request for permission to conclude a contract with Dr. Bruce Glasgow, who is applying, in the name of an American company, for a concession for the construction and working of railways in certain places in Anatolia without guarantees from present and fixed revenues, but on condition of profiting by the discovered and undiscovered mines. The Bill sent by the Government is for permission to conclude a contract with a certain person indicated. Now, as it is possible that other competitors may be found for the building of these railways on the same conditions as those set forth in the said Bill, or on still more favourable terms, and as applications of this nature have already been made to the Chamber of Deputies, the said Committee approved, and that Committee's detailed examination was accepted by the general assembly of the Chamber of Deputies, that instead of the aforesaid Bill permission should be given to the executive to conclude a contract with the company offering the terms which are best and most favourable to the interests of the country for a concession to build and work lines (1) from Sivas, passing Kharput, Erghani, Diarbekir, and Bitlis, and the northern or southern shore of Lake Van; (2) starting from a point to be fixed on the Van–Sivas–Diarbekir line and running to Yumurtalik viâ the Jihan Valley; (3) starting from a point on the Diarbekir–Van line and stretching to Mosul, Kerkuk, and Suleimanieh, on the following terms:—

1. No guarantee shall be given by the Ottoman Government for assuring the capital or the interest for either the building or the working of the lines, but in return a 99 years' concession shall be given for the mines, now being worked in the name of the Government, or which shall be discovered by the company, in the land within a distance of 20 kilom. on both sides of the line to be constructed.

2. To ensure the carrying out of the railway surveys, a suitable sum of money shall be handed over by the company to the Government, and the preliminary surveys shall be made within a suitable period, and the report on the subject shall be submitted to the Government.

3. The contract to be concluded between the Government and the company seeking the concession shall be submitted to the confirmation of the general Assembly (Chamber of Deputies).

This proposal, as set forth in a teskereh of the Presidency of the Chamber of Deputies, No. 103 of the 8th August, 1325 (21st August, 1909), and the teskereh and its enclosures were examined in a general sitting of the Senate. The aforesaid documents should, first, according to the requirements of the Constitution, and of the internal regulation, have been handed over to a committee; but the Cabinet having pleaded urgency, and the time being unfavourable, the plea was accepted, and the said teskereh and its enclosures having been read and examined in the general Assembly of the Senate, and accepted with modifications by the Chamber of Deputies, it was confirmed by a majority that permission should be given to the executive, and it was resolved that, after applying for the Royal sanction, the Decree should be published in the official newspaper and handed over to the executive to be applied and carried out.

[36613] No. 10.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 4.)

(No. 790.)

Sir, *Therapia, September 29, 1909.*

WITH reference to your despatch No. 289 of the 21st instant, I have the honour to report that no action has yet been taken by my French colleague with regard to the claims of French subjects for losses caused by the recent massacres at Adana and the surrounding district. The German Ambassador has now, however, sent in a note to the Sublime Porte informing them that, as the result of the Adana court-martial clearly showed that the local authorities had failed to fulfil their duty, and they had conclusive evidence that the soldiery had taken an active part in the work of pillage and destruction instead of being employed to resist disturbances of order, it was the intention of the German Government to hold the Turkish Government responsible for the losses suffered by German subjects, a list of whose claims would be presented to the Porte at a later date. My German colleague is not, however, very sanguine with regard to the probable result of his action, and thinks it will be difficult to obtain compensation from the Ottoman Government for the losses of foreign subjects. While I am inclined to share this view, it seems to me that the responsibility of the local authorities was to a certain extent established and recognised by the Adana court-martial (see my despatch No. 767 of the 16th instant), and it is admitted at the Porte; and I venture to suggest that it might be well to take an early opportunity of presenting a list to the Porte of such claims as have up to now been received by this embassy, in the hope that it may prove possible to induce the Ottoman Government to pay some compensation. They amount in all to 6,869*l.* 19*s.* 9½*d.*, exclusive of a claim from the Westcott and Lawrence line for an unfixed sum on account of the detention of the steam-ship "Gulf of Suez" at Mersina with refugees on board, and of several claims of native agents and dragomans amounting to about 7,837*l.* 5*s.*

I have, &c.

GERARD LOWTHER.

[36614] No. 11.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 4.)

(No. 791. Confidential.)

Sir, *Therapia, September 29, 1909.*

I HAVE the honour to submit the following information, obtained from an official in the Ministry of Public Works, concerning railway concessions, a loan for the construction of roads, and the interference of the Grand Vizier in the work of the various departments of State.

Count Vitalis' scheme for the Homs–Tripoli (Syria) railway will be put through, and matters are already fairly far advanced. He is also to have the concession for the Demir–Hissar–Djouma–Bala line, which the Turks are anxious to have built.

The Government are not, however, pressing for the building of the Drama–Cavalla line—another of Vitalis' schemes—as it is not felt to be a matter of immediate necessity.

Count Vitalis is also interested in the Samsoun–Sivas line, and, in order to overcome any difficulty which may be raised by Russia, he has interested Russian capital in the scheme. The official from whom this information was obtained saw no reason why this scheme should not succeed.

The department had not even examined Colonel Schaeffer's project for the Alexandretta–Suleymanieh line, as the greater part of the country through which the line is to run comes within the Baghdad Railway zone, and, until the Germans put down their final "traced," the department think it useless to study the scheme, which, in the opinion of the above-mentioned official, has no chance of success.

Colonel Schaeffer has also put forward a scheme similar to those of Messrs. Glasgow and Chester. Both the latter are at present in suspense.

The German application for a concession for the Rayak–el-Arish line (Egyptian frontier) has fallen through.

The department is negotiating, in conjunction with the Treasury, a loan of ten millions for the construction of roads; the preliminary work on this subject has just been commenced.

Much dissatisfaction is felt in the department at the interference of the Grand Vizier. His Highness is said to be endeavouring to control all the departments on the lines of the old régime, and this is causing friction.

I have, &c.

GERARD LOWTHER.

[36617] No. 12.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 4.)

(No. 794.)

Sir, *Constantinople, September 19, 1909.*

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith a despatch from Mr. Rawlins, acting vice-consul at Kharput, on the subject of reforms in the Dersim, in which he reports an impending interview between the mushir and the vali, measures taken to maintain tranquillity, &c.

I have, &c.

GERARD LOWTHER.

Inclosure in No. 12.

Acting Vice-Consul Rawlins to Sir G. Lowther.

(No. 47.)

Sir, *Kharput, September 16, 1909.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 13 of the 2nd September, referring to the Dersim, I have the honour to report that the vali has given me the following further information on the subject:—

A communication has lately been received from the mushir, who is now in Khozat, to the effect that the tribes in the Kizil Kilisse district have now been subdued and that the whole region is quiet.

As a measure of precaution, however, the mushir has decided to leave three battalions in the Dersim, 200 men being kept permanently in garrison at Khozat and the remainder in Mazguerd, Chemizkezek, Kizil Kilisse, and other necessary places.

The mushir has invited his Excellency the vali to come and meet him at Khozat in order to converse on the subject of road-making and other reforms, and the latter has telegraphed asking for permission to go to the Minister of the Interior, from whom no answer has up to now been received.

I have, &c.

E. C. DONALDSON RAWLINS.

[36619] No. 13.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 4.)

(No. 796.)

Sir, *Constantinople, September 29, 1909.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 767 of the 16th instant, I have the honour to forward herewith a despatch from His Majesty's acting vice-consul at Adana reporting further with regard to the court-martial sitting at Adana.

I have, &c.

GERARD LOWTHER.

Inclosure in No. 13.

Acting Vice-Consul Chafy to Sir G. Lowther.

(No. 9.)

Sir, *Adana, September 22, 1909.*

I HAVE the honour to report the following with regard to the courts-martial sitting in the vilayet of Adana.

Yussuf Kenan Pasha left Adana for Constantinople on the 17th instant.

With reference to the reported condemnation of Armenians at Erzin, I have the

honour to add the following details to the account given in my despatch, No. 6 of the 15th September.

The so-called Armenian "spy" of Dortyol is reported to have met a just death (seeing that the conditions were temporarily those of war) at the hands of his co-religionists for having, during the siege of Dortyol, betrayed a plan of the besieged Armenians to communicate by water with Alexandretta.

The Circassian chief, Arslan Bey, is probably the one mentioned in a despatch to your Excellency dated the 29th May, 1909, in which the following passage occurs:—

"A crowd of Armenians going along one of the Hajin roads before the outbreak murdered a puzzled and unsuspecting Circassian chief. They burned his body and skinned his horse to prevent identification. They did not know themselves who he was, but first robbed and then murdered him . . . . . it was a particularly brutal murder, as the Circassians saved the village of Char and protected many Christians."

The Lieutenant Teber mentioned in my despatch is also probably identical with the Yuzbashi to whom the following reference is quoted from the despatch of the 2nd May:—

"They (the Armenians) were unwilling to admit that the men who killed the Yuzbachi . . . . before a shot had been fired were to blame."

A sort of secondary court-martial is still sitting in Adana. They expect to rise shortly.

Mr. Chambers, of the American Mission, has lately appeared twice before this court, and given verbal evidence as to the murder, during the massacres, of the Armenian preacher, Hovagim, who was stabbed, practically, in his arms. He had not previously been asked to give this evidence, and carries away the impression that the case is not receiving serious attention.

The vali informs me that the sentences passed on the ex-vali, ex-ferik, Ihsan Fikri, and Abd-ul-Kader Baghdadi, as reported in the press, are correct and official. Up to date of writing, of these four only the ex-vali has left Adana. I am not wiring this news—the first official notification of the sentences I have received—as your Excellency has doubtless received it some time ago from official sources in Constantinople.

Speaking of the sentences, the vali informed me that to a deputation of the various heads of the Christian churches in Adana, which waited on him to protest against their inadequacy, he replied (quibbling) that whereas it contained provisions sanctioning the condemnation of Armenians to fifteen years' penal servitude, the Penal Code employed by the court-martial was technically incompetent to pass heavier sentences than those given, on functionaries such as an ex-vali and an ex-ferik. He admitted, it is true, the urgent necessity in such a case of a reform of the said Penal Code.

He took occasion to warn this deputation of the danger of parading Adana in this collective manner to make formal protests on such a matter at such a time.

I am afraid the Christians will not get any satisfaction in this respect from Djemal Bey. He openly declares his dislike for Christian priests and their ways, though up till now he has made a good impression in local ecclesiastical circles.

It is certainly difficult to understand the motives of the apparent whitewashing of the chief promoters of the massacres. The impression to be gathered from the attitude of the Young Turks here is that a motive dictated by some undisclosed policy does exist, and that it is not altogether fear of the consequences which forbade them to initiate the wholesale *épuration* of the capital. The inevitable loose rumour of bribes is current.

The acquittal of the Sei Getchid murderers, of the mutessarif of Djebel-i-Bereket, and of a certain Salih Effendi, who is said to have given the signal for the massacre by means of a factory steam hooter, are equally unaccountable.

No hangings are to take place during Ramazan. The suspense pending further executions must be injurious to the public peace of mind, yet at the present moment Adana, both day and night (the restriction on night circulation is temporarily removed), is a city of a most model behaviour.

The vali tells me that no importance is attached here to the events at Zeitun, where a slight affray between Armenians and troops or gendarmes, resulting in no casualty, has taken place. It appears that everything is at present quiet there. Troops sent from Adana have been recalled. Seven of the fourteen Armenians wanted by the court-martial have surrendered, and the remainder have been given a certain delay to do the same. The Zeitunlis have a bad reputation here for lawlessness.

The vali said that agreements with regard to a Christian police force made in 1892 are, since the constitution, a dead letter.

The following decisions of the first court-martial are officially published here:—

Two Mussulmans of Kharput are sentenced to fifteen years' imprisonment for murder, one Mussulman to five years for the same crime, and another to one year for being accessory to murder.

The third court-martial of Adana has sentenced Ismail Safa, ex-sub-editor of the notorious "Ittidal," to one month's imprisonment. The decision of his guilt seems to have hung on his use in print of the word "truce," which was found to imply a projected continuation of the massacres.

I have, &c.
R. E. W. CHAFY.

[36620] No. 14.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(*Received October 4.*)

(No. 797.)
Sir, *Constantinople, September 29, 1909.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 728 of the 9th instant, I have the honour to forward herewith a despatch from His Majesty's acting vice-consul at Adana, transmitting the first report of the Adana Government Relief Commission with observations. With regard to the reference to the director of the local branch of the Ottoman Bank, I have the honour to add that I did not think it necessary to suggest the addition of an extra member to the commission.

I have, &c.
GERARD LOWTHER.

Inclosure 1 in No. 14.

Acting Vice-Consul Chafy to Sir G. Lowther.

(No. 10.)
Sir, *Adana, September 22, 1909.*

I HAVE the honour to enclose under separate cover a translation of the first official report of the Adana Government Relief Commission, and to submit the following remarks on the subject of relief work here:—

My telegram of the 21st instant, hinting at the rather marked attention paid by the local branch of the Ottoman Bank to their private interests at the expense of needy individuals may perhaps appear to your Excellency a little illogical in view of my despatch No. 5 of the 9th instant, in which I recommended M. Grabowski as a fit person to conduct the financial work of the vali's relief organisation. It is true that without a European man of business this relief work would probably have met with failure. At the same time I fancy a local bank director is apt to be rather too intimately acquainted with local commercial, and, especially in this case, agricultural financial conditions, to serve to the fullest extent the interests of small individuals. That is to say, that he has an inevitable tendency in the case of loans made to farmers and merchants, whom the support given is likely to place again in a large way of business, thus directly serving the interests of the bank, to dismiss rather too lightly small, and perhaps just, claims in favour of such possible useful clients. It is obvious, too, and indeed a case has already occurred, that the bank will support the claims to a loan of those directly indebted to it.

Agreeably to your Excellency's directions that I should confine myself principally, as a member of the Financial Commission, to endeavouring to prevent abuse in the matter of claims, I am submitting these details for what they are worth. I am afraid it would be extremely difficult to counteract now this tendency to bias on the part of the bank, and perhaps after all it is fully balanced by the value of the expert advice of its director in matters not too closely affecting its own interests. A burst of prosperity on the part of the bank and the personal profit and advancement of its director is certainly preferable to wholesale embezzlement by an unadulterated commission of muddling Turks. I think in the present case any open abuse is out of the question. The vali is obviously sincere, but has no particular experience in financial matters, and,

being new to local commercial conditions, is naturally very much under the influence of the bank director, who is well versed in those conditions, and as a matter of fact has a very large share in the disposition of the £ T. 100,000 loan money.

Your Excellency will doubtless appreciate the situation, and probably consider my suggestion of the inclusion of an extra member in the Financial Commission a mistake. It would certainly offend the vali and lead to friction with the bank director. But I wished at any rate, in the name of fair play, to indicate a possible abuse and suggest a remedy.

If the new vali's efforts fail it will not be for want of energy. Twice this week the Financial Commission has remained in session from 9·30 P.M. (European time) till 2·30 A.M. The work is being steadily pushed forward in view of the approaching seed time, and the importance to the vilayet of its agricultural resources, the farmers are to be the first to receive advances from the £ T. 100,000 voted for that purpose. The needs of tradesmen and artisans, the other two classes to benefit under this head, are considered to be less pressing.

It is hoped to complete the rough apportionment of the total sum in a week's time.

The disposition of the other £ T. 100,000 in relief appears to proceed satisfactorily. I hope shortly to be able to obtain and submit to your Excellency some statement of Government relief accounts.

A loan, independent of the £ T. 200,000, is proposed to be contracted by the Adana municipality for the purpose of building a new quarter of the city to contain about 250 houses.

Plans and drawings of the projected Adana orphanange, executed by M. Charles Chartier, a French engineer, were examined and approved last night by the Financial Commission. This orphanage, as at present projected, is to house 500 children. The cost of its erection is estimated at £ T. 6,000. Newspaper statements to the effect that local Mussulmans are to contribute largely to this scheme are inaccurate. So far not a farthing is forthcoming from such a source. The expense is to be met partly from existing relief funds, and partly, it is hoped, from large gifts of the Tobacco Régie, Bagdad Railway, and other big concerns. The vali hopes to squeeze perhaps £ T. 500 from Mussulman residents. This is a most interesting scheme to watch in progress, and one which is not likely to be realised without some difficulty, both financial and otherwise.

The vali's tour through the affected districts of his province has had to be deferred owing to the mass of work claiming his immediate attention.

Orders for the clearing away of the débris of ruined houses and for the cleaning of the streets by gangs of prisoners have already been given.

I have, &c.

R. E. W. CHAFY.

Inclosure 2 in No. 14.

First Report of the Adana Government Relief Committee.

A COMMITTEE, under the presidency of the vali, consisting of the persons mentioned below, has been formed for the spending in a proper and expeditious manner of the £ T. 100,000 voted for the special uses of the vilayet of Adana.

The objects to which this sum is to be devoted are the repair and reconstruction of dwellings and other edifices burnt during the "events" at Adana, and the assurance of means of subsistence for the population; and the committee is also to consider the adoption of measures for the amelioration of social conditions throughout the vilayet.

The above-mentioned committee has unanimously adopted and approved the following resolution:—

List of Members.

Djemal Bey, governor-general of the vilayet of Adana, President.
M. Grabowski (French subject), director of the Adana branch of the Imperial Ottoman Bank.
Mr. Chambers, head of the American Mission at Adana.
Edward Nathan, Esq., American consul at Mersina.
R. E. W. Chafy, Esq., acting British vice-consul at Adana.

Herr Stoeckel (German subject), "General Bevollmächtiger, Deutsch-Levantinische Baumwoll-Gesellschaft," Adana.
Père Joure, superior of the French Jesuit Mission at Adana.
Soubhi Pasha, Turkish notable of Adana.
Boghos Effendi, representative of the Catholic Armenian Patriarchate.
Dr. Salibian, physician attached to Miss Wallis's English Mission Pharmacy (Ottoman subject).
Garabet Effendi, a Constantinople lawyer, acting as Patriarchal delegate at Adana.
Artin Effendi, Catholic Armenian Bishop.
Istepan Effendi, representative of the Chaldean Patriarchate.
Istepan Bizdikian Effendi (Ottoman subject).
M. Charles Chartier (French subject), engineer employed for public works by the Adana municipality.
Riza Bey, Turkish engineer.
M. Stanislas Kozolovski, engineer employed on the Bagdad Railway.
Hampartsum Effendi, Armenian Protestant pastor.
Ibrahim Sadik Effendi, local notable.
Kahust Geulbenkian Bey.

Article 1. The already existing Ottoman Government relief committee is to be converted into a new commission, to be known as the "Relief and Employment Commission." Some of its members are detailed for other work, and some new members are added to this new organisation.

List of Members.

Soubhi Pasha.
Rev. W. N. Chambers.
M. Manolli Trypani, of the firm of Trypani Brothers, Cotton Spinners, Adana (Hellenic subject).
Khubserian Effendi, Dragoman to the French Consulate at Mersina.
Ibrahim Sadik Effendi.
Markarian Effendi.
Dr. Salibian.
Delifferian Effendi.
Ynanki Effendi.
Miss Webb, of the American Mission at Adana.
Mrs. Shephard, wife of Dr. Shephard, American Missionary Doctor.
Mrs. Chambers.

This commission will, together with the ecclesiastical authorities of each community, examine the registers at present in the hands of those communities. And to begin with each community is to keep three registers in the manner following:—

1. A register containing the names of families, including either a head of the family or one of its members, in the case of males, of an age between 18 and 65, and in the case of females 20 and 45, who is able-bodied and fit for work.

This register shall contain first of all the name of the head of the family, followed by those of its members. The ages of the members of the family, together with the work which they are able to perform, in the case of both males and females, shall be entered in separate columns. For this purpose the word "family" shall be taken to denote a father and mother with children and servants. Relations, such as a paternal uncle, shall not be considered as heads of families, and even if a child lives with its uncle it shall be counted as a separate family.

To families entered in this register absolutely no relief will be given, and their able-bodied members, whether heads of families or otherwise, shall be sent to work which, if necessary, will be provided for them. Only in the case of the number of the members of a family exceeding five, relief to the extent of 30 paras a day will be given to each extra member. Supposing a widow to have two children of less than 10 years old and no daughter besides them of an age between 15 and 20, even if she goes to work herself, she and her children shall each receive relief to the extent of 1 piastre a day.

But women who have a daughter of an age between 15 and 20 shall not receive any relief, as this daughter can look after the children.

The names of the members of those families to be inscribed in this register who go to work shall be entered as this work is found for them, with the nature of the work and the rate of pay for it noted opposite.

2. Those, in the case of males, of an age less than 18 or above 65, and, in the case of women, less than 20 and above 45, or, in the case of men, of an age between 18 and 65, and in the case of women, 20 and 45, who are physically incapable of working, shall, supposing that no member of their respective families is bound to fulfil the conditions laid down in the first register, be entered together with their families in a separate register and shall, together with the members of their families receive relief at the rate of 50 paras a head.

3. The names of children of each community who are already inscribed in the second register, and who have lost both father and mother, or whose mothers are physically incapable of working, shall be entered separately in a third register, This register shall be known as the "register of orphans."

Thus the first register will show the families of each community containing able-bodied members, and which are therefore not in need of relief, the second those which are still in need, and a third the names of orphans, thus affording a basis of data on which to form plans for the foundation of the projected orphanage. To come under the appellation of "orphan" both boys and girls must not have attained the age of 15 years.

Three registers in the manner explained above will also be kept in the case of those Mussulmans who are in need of relief. And the names of Mussulman orphans will be entered in a separate register.

As these three registers are to be kept as explained by each community, the inhabitants of every village and kaza will be severally inscribed therein.

These registers having been drawn up in such a manner as to display the individual needs of every single family will be submitted for confirmation to the various religious bodies, and copies of them will be distributed as follows: one copy of each to the ecclesiastical bodies, two copies of each, accompanied by a report to the provincial Government, one copy of each to the registering commission.

One copy of each of the registers containing the names of needy Mussulmans and orphans shall be kept by the mufti. One copy of each of the relief registers kept in the kazas, with the exception of the kaza of Adana, shall be kept by the kaza building commissions. These building commissions shall also be charged with the distribution of relief in the kazas. The said building commissions, whose general duties will be hereinafter set forth, and prescribed and limited by official instructions, shall in matters connected with relief refer to the relief and employment commission.

The relief and employment commission, while setting to work on the one hand to draw up the registers of the central organization, shall, on the other hand, by the speedy dispatch of one or two of its members into each of the most important kazas, prepare their registers also. The registers of places difficult of access shall for the present be drawn up through the medium of the building commissions.

Notice is hereby given that those whose names are inscribed in relief registers will be cut off from the receipt of relief if they are not duly enrolled at the census office, or if, having lost their certificates as Ottoman subjects, they do not provide themselves with one within a month's time.

This commission is authorized in the fulfilment of the duties enumerated above, to enter into direct relations with the local governments of sanjaks, kazas, or building commissions as the case may be. If necessary the whole commission in a body or represented by individual members shall be enabled to pay visits to the kazas and suggest to the government of the vilayet any plans which may occur to them either with regard to finding work or to increasing the relief if need be.

In a word this commission is responsible for providing with work the able-bodied among the needy of the vilayet and assuring the means of comfort and alleviation to its impotent and sickly.

£T. 15,000 is to be allotted from the general fund to the special credit of this commission, dated the 28th August, 1909.

Therefore the accounts of this newly allotted sum of £T. 15,000 shall be kept quite separate from those of the relief commissions, which have up till now been operating in every kaza.

Since, therefore, henceforth relief is to be distributed in the kazas by the newly formed building commissions, the former relief commissions should go into their accounts with all despatch and present their balance-sheets and vouchers.

The relief and employment committee, as soon as ever it has drawn up correct

registers of those in each kaza who stand in need of a share of the sum thus specially entrusted to it, shall open a credit in each kaza according to its needs.

The building commissions should send in their applications for funds every fortnight or so. The relief and employment committee will then, in order to effect the grant of the sums required, forward the application in their turn to the direction of the financial commission controlling the building and relief commissions in the vilayet of Adana, which alone is empowered to grant the money. The formation of this financial commission will be described later.

This commission shall employ two clerks, to receive 16 and 10 piastres a-day respectively.

Minutes shall be kept of the questions discussed and the decisions arrived at at each meeting of this commission; and the work accomplished and the measures taken every day shall be examined at the said meetings and also noted down.

2. A commission consisting of the following persons has been formed to prepare detailed plans for the reconstruction of the burnt quarters of the kaza of Adana.

List of Members.

Sobhhi Pasha.
M. Chartier, engineer.
Riza Bey, engineer.
Dr. Salibian Effendi.
Manuk Effendi, local merchant.

The above-mentioned gentlemen shall take the already existing plans in the office of public works and the municipality, shall complete the plans of those portions of the burnt quarter which have never been fully drawn up, and shall make a scientific comparison between the quarter and the plans of it, and, having prepared an exhaustive project for the work in hand, shall submit it for approval to the general commission.

This commission shall also prepare plans and estimates for the reconstruction of the burnt mosque (*sic*), churches, and schools, and shall submit them to the general commission.

3. The commission charged with the building of the houses in need of repair in the kaza of Adana, of those burnt houses in quarters not coming into the scope of the second commission, and of the dwellings of those people who having lost their own are living in rented houses or who are altogether homeless, though, in order to work in harmony with, and to conform to the regulations laid down for the general building commission, they may draw up registers, shall enter in a separate register the names and numbers of the members of those families who are rendered homeless on account of the fires.

The municipal council (Heyiet-i-Idare) shall later on decide the sites, cost, and plans of the houses to be built for these persons.

This commission shall consist of the following members:

Hajji Ibrahim Effendi, lawyer.
Hajji Aga Shekar Oglou.
Kulust Goulbenkian Bey.
Shukri Effendi, artillery captain.
Yuanaki Effendi.
Ashkian Doferian Effendi.

One building commission shall be formed in each kaza. They shall perform their duties in accordance with special instructions given to them. The formation of these commissions in the various kazas is as follows:—

Building Commission for Adana, Hamidieh, Karn Essarlou, and adjoining districts.

M. Charles Daudé, French subject.
Assdur Kalustepan.
First Lieutenant Ali Effendi, 1st Battalion, 77th Regiment.
Zacharia Effendi.
Ibrahim Sadik Effendi.

Building Commission for the Kaza of Tarsus.

This commission shall consist of the Caimakam, as president, with three other members to be chosen by the Caimakam in consultation with First Lieutenant Galib Effendi.

Kaza of Osmanieh.

First Lieutenant Hassan Tahsin Effendi, 1st Company, 4th Battalion, 77th Regiment.
Taurus Mishian Effendi.
Anteranik Effendi, Armenian priest.
Misak Mumasian Effendi.
Artin Effendi.

Kazas of Bughshe, Isslahieh, and Hasse.

The following members have been elected to the above-mentioned commission.
Dr. Shepard, American missionary doctor.
Lieutenant Shakir Effendi.
Zia Effendi, assistant controller of revenue.
Ghrabet Parsikhian, of Hassan Beyli.
Avedis Mugdisian, of Bughshe.

Kaza of Erzin.

Lieutenant Nouri Effendi, 29th Cavalry Regiment.
Vartan Beranian, Armenian bodvilli.
Ohannes Kara Serkesian Effendi.

Kazas of Sis and Kurs.

First Lieutenant Talaat Effendi, 3rd Battalion, 83rd Regiment.
Samuel Tozjian.
Matus Nalbendian Effendi.

Kaza of Hajin.

Second Lieutenant Beshir Effendi, 1st Company, 4th Battalion, 38th Regiment.
Two other members will be chosen by the Caimacam of Hajin in consultation with Commandant Loutfi Bey.

A commission consisting of the following persons will be formed to decide the manner of apportioning relief to farmers.

List of Members.

M. Grabowski, Director of the Ottoman Bank.
Istepan Bizdikian Effendi.
Hemtenbi Effendi.
Mihran Effendi.
Avtin Bizdikian Effendi.

6. A commission consisting of the vali, as president, and the following six persons, shall be formed, in order to audit and examine the accounts, supervise the operations, and collect the bills and receipts of all the building and relief commissions. This commission shall be known as the "financial commission controlling the building and relief commissions."

List of Members.

Assim Effendi, kadi of the vilayet.
Kemal Bey, ex-defterdar of the vilayet of Aidin (is not acting as a member of this commission).
Maktubji of the vilayet, Hakki Behich Bey.
M. Grabowski, director of the Ottoman Bank.
Mr. Chaty, acting British vice-consul.
M. Chartier, engineer employed for public works.

Mr. Fabaga (Maltese British subject), a clerk employed by the Ottoman Bank, is appointed to act as accountant for this commission. The commission in session shall give him special instructions as to the performance of his duties.

7. In order to found an orphanage at Adana, a commission shall be formed to prepare an exhaustive report as to the scientific establishment of orphanages. The commission shall present an estimate of cost, and shall prepare a one year's specimen budget of such an establishment, which, when completed, shall be submitted to the approval of the general commission. This commission shall be known as the orphanage commission, and shall consist of the following members:—

List of Members.

Rev. W. N. Chambers.
M. Chartier.
Herr Stoeckel.
Artin Badlian Effendi.
Eshref Bey, municipal sanitary inspector.
Dr. Kalustian Effendi.
Mdm. Zabel Asian, one of the Patriarchal delegates.
Father Superior of the French Jesuit Fathers.

8. The expenses of setting up small artisans with capital, and of the renovation of such houses in Adana city as are susceptible of repair will be exclusively met by the international relief committee.

A commission is to be formed under the presidency of the municipal sanitary inspector, and consisting of other local or foreign doctors, in order to adopt the measures rendered necessary in the interests of public health by the approach of winter. Part of the expense incurred in carrying out this commission's decisions will be met also by the said international relief committee. But in the event of their funds being insufficient to meet the work under contract, application may be made to the general relief fund, and, if there is any relief money to spare, the expenses shall be paid according to conditions regulated by the general commission.

9. The rent of houses either in the kazas of Adana or Tarsus, temporarily hired for those who are awaiting the repair or construction of dwellings of their own, will be paid by the relief and employment commission in one payment, and only on condition that a part of the amount is paid back every three months. These rents will for the present be paid out of the sum of £T. 15,000 specially allotted to the relief and employment commission.

10. The following is an approximate estimate of the amounts to be allotted for building and repairs to each building commission:—

	£ T.
Bageho	10,000
Osmanieh	500
Erzin	3,500
Sis	2,000
Hajin	1,500
Tarsus	6,000
Kaza of Adana	3,000
„ „	5,000
Total	31,500

Besides this, another £T. 15,000 will be set aside for relief and rent of houses, and the remainder will form a reserve fund.

The persons who have adopted these minutes and have placed their signatures below have decided to authorise the formation of a commission to be known as the "General Building and Relief Commission for the Vilayet of Adana," the holding of general meetings to discuss relief business when considered necessary by the vali, and the formation of the financial commission in the above mentioned manner to spend the £T. 100,000 specially voted for the uses of the vilayet of Adana.

(Follow the signatures of the members of the General Commission, as given on pp. 12 and 13.)

[36970] No. 15.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 5.)

(No. 338.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, October 5, 1909.*

LYNCH concession: repurchase clause.

Partly owing to influence which has been brought to bear unofficially on Javid Bey and Halajian Effendi, both of them members of the Committee of Union and Progress and influential in the Cabinet, the latter has offered to increase the term for the expiration of solo rights, without compensation, to fifty-two and a-half years, the Government to retain the right, on payment of compensation for losses, whose amount would be settled by arbitration, of repurchasing the company's rights after a period of thirty-seven and a-half years.

The offer is subject to the sanction of the Council of Ministers.

[36970] No. 16.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Lowther.

(No. 675.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Foreign Office, October 5, 1909.*

TIGRIS and Euphrates navigation.

Please see your telegrams Nos. 337 and 338 of the 2nd and 4th instant respectively.

The proposal made by the Minister of Public Works for option to repurchase exclusive rights after the lapse of thirty-seven and a half years satisfies Lynch; and he accepts the proposal subject to all other questions arising out of statutes, "cahier des charges," and convention being settled to the mutual satisfaction of his representative and the Porte.

Lynch points out that the Porte on the 22nd September gave their express assent to the clause whereby the continued existence of the company was assured, and he therefore objects to the proposal that the company should not continue beyond a period of seventy-five years.

I leave it to you to decide whether it would be possible to insist on the Turks fulfilling such a pledge, if given by them.

[36972] No. 17.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Lowther.

(No. 676.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Foreign Office, October 5, 1909.*

ACCORDING to information received by the Smyrna-Aidin Railway Company, brigands at Chifte Kairé have burned the company's property there. The Porte should make themselves responsible for the protection of the company's property, and you should urge them to take the necessary steps in this connection.

[36970] No. 18.

Foreign Office to Mr. H. F. B. Lynch, M.P.

Foreign Office, October 5, 1909.

Sir,

WITH reference to my letter of yesterday's date in regard to the concession for the navigation of the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers, I am directed by the Secretary of State to inform you that, according to a telegram from Sir G. Lowther the Turkish Government now offer to extend to fifty-two and a-half years the term for withdrawing exclusive rights of navigation without compensation, while reserving to themselves the option to repurchase those rights after thirty-seven and a-half years, compensation for all losses to be fixed by arbitrators.

I am, &c.
LOUIS MALLET.

[37045] No. 19.

Mr. Lynch to Foreign Office.—(Received October 6.)

33, Pont Street, London, October 5, 1909.

Sir,

IN reply to your letter of yesterday's date, I have just received a telegram from our representative at Constantinople, of which the following is the text:—

"I have shown the Minister of Public Works your telegram of the 2nd instant. He states that he is prepared to place and support the following before the Council of Ministers on Wednesday: option Government to buy back the exclusive rights at the end of half concession (thirty-seven and a-half years), paying compensation by arbitration for losses thus incurred by the company; or option Government at the end of fifty-two and a-half years to withdraw the exclusive rights without compensation, river being thrown open to the Turkish flag and our company until the end of the period of seventy-five years. After this period has elapsed either the river to be thrown open to the Turkish flag, including our company, or the Turkish Government to have the power to conduct the service as a Government monopoly, purchasing the property of the company at an expert valuation."

His Majesty's Government will note that these are essential changes in the convention, and that the proposal of the Minister of Public Works constitutes a breach of faith on the part of the Turkish Government. The price our group has agreed to pay to the Turkish Government is 161,000*l.*, and their properties are not worth more than about 30,000*l.* The balance was calculated on the basis of the new rights conferred under the convention.

We should, however, be willing to concede to the Turkish Government the option to repurchase the exclusive part of the rights conferred at the end of thirty-seven and a-half years as proposed by the Minister of Public Works. But, as our representative in Constantinople warns us that the Turkish Government are always taking up new ground, and as they have already broken their promise not to introduce further essential changes, we think you will agree that some very definite assurance should be given to His Majesty's Government by the Turkish Government that they are in agreement with our representative on all other points arising out of the convention, statutes, and "cahier des charges" before our definite acceptance of this last concession is communicated to the Turkish Government.

As regards the further demand of the Minister of Public Works, that the Government shall have the right at the end of the period of seventy-five years to put an end to the new company altogether, I must point out that the clause in the convention expressly negativing this course was expressly accepted by the Turkish Cabinet on the 22nd September. I trust that His Majesty's Government will not permit the Turkish Government to go back on that decision. It would mean the complete surrender of all the British rights of navigation—rights which arose out of two costly expeditions equipped by the British Government, that of Colonel Chesney in 1835-37, and that of Commodore Lynch in 1837 and following years. I cannot believe that His Majesty's Government will be willing to make such a surrender, though I have admitted that we should so far trust the reformed Government in Turkey as to confide them to a new company under Ottoman jurisdiction.

Yours respectfully,
H. F. B. LYNCH.

[35807] No. 20.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Lowther.

(No. 316.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, October 7, 1909.*

I HAVE received your Excellency's despatch No. 769 of the 22nd ultimo, enclosing copy of a report from the British vice-consul at Adana on recent sentences of the Adana court-martial.

In my opinion, a very bad effect will be produced if these sentences are carried out, but I must leave it to your Excellency's discretion to decide whether you can usefully take any action in the matter.

I am, &c.
E. GREY.

[37316] No. 21.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 9.)

(No. 340.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, October 9, 1909.*

LYNCH concession.

With reference to my telegram No. 338 of the 5th October, I have the honour to report that Lynch's agent here has received instructions to persuade me to advocate the retention, in the sixth clause of the draft convention, of the second paragraph, and, if this could not be effected, to insist that, at the expiry of the seventy-five years, the Turkish Government should permit Lynch to keep on three boats on the present terms after the property of the company had been taken over at an expert valuation.

This suggestion is entirely incompatible with the arrangements for amalgamation with the Seniyeh company, and would undoubtedly imperil the success of the whole affair. I fear that no further action on my part will be of any use unless Lynch can at once accept the present proposals as they now stand.

It would perhaps be well to inform immediately and clearly Lynch of this, as if he can accept the convention at once the matter can be dealt with at next Sunday's Council of Ministers, while, if his decision is not given before the Bairam fêtes, a delay would result which must be prejudicial.

[37316] No. 22.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Lowther.

(No. 677.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Foreign Office, October 9, 1909.*

TIGRIS and Euphrates navigation.

Substance of your telegram No. 340 of the 9th October has been communicated to Lynch. I have advised him strongly to lose no time in closing with the offer of the Porte without attempting to modify it, and have told him that His Majesty's Government concur in the views expressed in your above-mentioned telegram.

[37537] No. 23.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 11.)

(No. 812.)
Sir, *Constantinople, October 2, 1909.*

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith a despatch from the acting consul at Jeddah, reporting on the state of affairs in the Hedjaz and Yemen, with special reference to the disturbed state of the country about Medina, and the Arab rising in the Yemen under Seyyid Ali-el-Idrisee of Sabyeah, together with a paraphrase of a telegram which I have just received showing an improvement of the situation in the Loheia district.

I have, &c.
GERARD LOWTHER.

Inclosure 1 in No. 23.

Acting Consul Richardson to Sir G. Lowther.

(No. 45.)
Sir, *Jeddah, August 30, 1909.*

I REGRET to inform your Excellency that owing to ill-health, I have been unable to report earlier on the state of affairs existing in the vilayets of the Hedjaz and Yemen.

About the third week in July there were rumours afloat that trouble was brewing in Mecca. It was expected that certain notorious Arabs amongst the townspeople contemplated, with the assistance of some Bedouins, an attack on the prison in which were confined about a dozen of their comrades that had been arrested under the orders of Marshal Kazim Pasha, the late vali, in connection with the disturbances that took place in Mecca in November last year. (Please see Mr. Monahan's despatches Nos. 60 and 64 of 1908.)

Dissatisfaction amongst the members of the Committee of "Union and Progress" at Mecca has prevailed ever since at the apparent weakness displayed by Kazim Pasha in dealing with the rioters on that occasion.

Fuad Pasha, with the co-operation of the Grand Shereef, has since assuming charge of the vilayet, caused the ringleaders and others concerned in the riots of last November to be arrested and put under restraint.

As soon as trouble was anticipated last month, the prisoners referred to above were removed to the principal fortress in Mecca, the guns of which were turned on the town and its garrison strengthened. Great excitement prevailed.

On the 22nd July the Grand Shereef, Hussein Pasha, arrived at Mecca from Taif, and exhorted the townspeople to desist from demonstrations hostile to the authorities and to remain tranquil, as nothing would happen on the present occasion.

His Highness was followed on the 26th by Fuad Pasha, the governor-general, accompanied by the commandant of Taif, a colonel of the staff, two guns, and a small detachment of troops.

On the vali's arrival in Mecca, some other disaffected Arabs were imprisoned, and orders sent to Taif to arrest the notorious Mahomed Ali, who for many years past served as chief secretary to the ex-Grand Shereefs Aoun and Ali respectively. It would appear that the disturbances in Mecca were fomented by the above-mentioned Mahomed Ali, in whose house was found a quantity of rifles, revolvers, arms, and ammunition, and that he had served out arms to the townspeople during the November incident.

Mahomed Ali was then brought under strong escort to Mecca, whence, in company of twenty others arrested since the first trouble in November 1908, he was dispatched to Jeddah.

The prompt and energetic action of the vali on the present occasion had the effect of nipping the projected disturbance in the bud, and the town settled down quietly thereafter.

Fuad Pasha, who on first arrival in the Hedjaz from Constantinople landed at Jeddah in "ahram," or pilgrim garb, and did not exchange visits with the consular corps, now availed himself of the opportunity of visiting this town and meeting the foreign consuls and principal merchants. He was, at the same time, anxious to arrange personally about the disposal of the twenty-one prisoners from Mecca.

His Excellency arrived here on the morning of the 9th instant, and received the visits of the consular body on the same afternoon, which he returned personally on the two following days.

The twenty-one prisoners were put on board the gun-boat "Tashkubri" during the early hours of the 10th morning, and were detained in that vessel till the arrival of the transport "Hodeidah," when they were transhipped and sent to Salonica for trial by court-martial.

The Vali remained in Jeddah till the 14th August, when he left for Mecca *en route* for Taif, his summer residence.

During his Excellency's short stay here he convened a meeting of the principal merchants and discussed with them the exchange question in the Hedjaz.

It would appear that Fuad Pasha has drafted a scheme for the elimination of foreign coins from the Hedjaz and the circulation of Turkish currency only. This he proposes to do by abolishing the "ansla" dollar, a fictitious coin used in this province as the basis of calculation in all commercial transactions.

The rates for foreign moneys are to be fixed by the local administration in tariff piastres (*i.e.*, Ottoman gold piastres), which will reduce their value from 15 to 25 per cent. according to the present local quotations. For example, the Turkish lira is now fixed at 103 piastres gold, whereas the Indian rupee will be 7 piastres instead of 8 as at present, and the Maria Theresa dollar at 6 piastres only against 10, the usual local rate.

The scheme, in short, is, in my humble opinion, quite impracticable, and does not find favour with local merchants and foreign firms alike.

Although the new tariff of exchange has been nominally put into force since the beginning of the Arabic month of Shaban (*i.e.*, since the 17th August), and proclamations issued penalising those who disregard it, it has only been adopted by a small section of the local mercantile community, including the sarrafs or money changers, who will gain considerably in exchange thereby. It is not at all expected that the new regulations will be observed for very long, for a few months at the outside, when the present tariff will most probably share the fate of its predecessors, unless the vilayet

presses the reform, and puts into circulation in this province a sufficiency of Turkish piastres and mejidies to serve commercial requirements.

Foreign pilgrims will lose considerably when exchanging their money, or when utilising same in purchasing supplies.

The water question, which is a very important one in Jeddah, was also raised during the vali's visit to this town, and the old scheme to bring water into the town from a place called "Ain Farraj" was revived, although I hardly think that anything will result from all this talk, or that steps will be taken to improve the water supply, if it can be appropriately said that Jeddah possesses a water supply at all.

The condenser for distilling sea water, set up in the town about two years ago, works by fits and starts, and if the water supply is not cut off owing to a break-down in the machinery, it generally remains interrupted while the water commission and their contractor, or the latter and his engineer, are at variance over some trifling matter.

The departure of Fuad Pasha for Jeddah coincided with that of the Grand Shereef, who set out from Mecca in the direction of Taif. His Highness was accompanied by his son, Shereef Ali, several members of the shereefian clan, and a following of Bedouins. Hussein Pasha, the Grand Shereef, then encamped at a place called Khulak, some distance outside Taif. The object of these warlike preparations on the part of his Highness is not known. It has been said that he intends to bring about the subjugation of the tribesmen in the country adjacent to Taif, while other rumours credit him with an intention to collect a force of 10,000 men and march in the direction of Medina, with a view to punishing the Arabs there that have been molesting caravans and pilgrims.

The following details reached me a few days ago from Medina regarding the state of affairs in that quarter.

The attention of the authorities at Medina have been turned during the month of Redjeb (17th July-16th August) to the depredations, in the neighbourhood, of Arabs belonging to the powerful tribes of El-Hamida, that inhabit the mountainous country to the south of that place. The latter can muster between 6,000 and 7,000 riflemen, that gave the Turks a deal of trouble in 1901. These tribesmen have been fairly quiet since and the present unrest has been brought about by the irregular payment by the local authorities of their annual hush-money. They have moreover been instigated to rise by the clan of Beni Ali, who it might be remembered caused the Hedjaz Government serious anxiety during the past pilgrim season, owing to their attacks on pilgrim caravans moving between Mecca and Medina.

The Arabs of the El-Hamida tribe began last month by molesting pilgrims to the shrine of Seyyid-el-Hamza that is just outside Medina.

On the 23rd July, twelve persons belonging to the above-mentioned tribe were captured by Turkish troops at a place called Hafeera and brought in chains into Medina. On the following day another man was captured. The sheikhs then sent a message to the authorities that they would come in and tender their submission if their clansmen were liberated. Their request was peremptorily refused, and the officials responded with the dispatch of a body of soldiers and two cannon to protect the pilgrim route to El-Hamza.

On the 27th July, that was the principal day of visit to the sacred shrine (El-Ziyarat), some tribesmen attacked the Turkish look-out station in the vicinity and wounded three soldiers. The same afternoon the Hedjaz railway line in that quarter was attacked, when two soldiers were killed. Some 36 metres of the railway line were destroyed by the raiders, that also dismantled the telegraph posts.

A force was immediately dispatched to the scene from Medina, and the railway line repaired and the telegraph-posts reinstalled.

Daily raids were made by the tribesmen thereafter, but proved ineffective owing to the townspeople arming themselves and assisting the troops to repel the attacks.

Finding their raids proved unsuccessful, the Arabs made overtures for peace on the 3rd instant, to which the Governor of Medina replied that a peaceful settlement could only be arrived at by the payment on the part of the tribe of blood-money for the Turkish soldiers killed, and the restitution of the loot taken by the Bedouins from caravans during the month of Rejab.

A few days later the railway station at Medina was fired on. The garrison were turned out under the commandant, who, with four guns, went after the raiders. The latter offered a stubborn resistance, but were eventually put to flight, after suffering some loss. Three Arabs were taken prisoners, and five Mauser rifles and five camels

captured. The casualties on the Turkish side consisted of three men killed and four wounded.

Reinforcements to the extent of twelve battalions have now been requisitioned by the authorities from Damascus to enable them to take strong measures against the rebellious and predatory tribe of El-Hamida, who, it is rumoured, have invoked the assistance of other neighbouring clans.

My informant reports that on the 6th instant 500 cases of rifles had been received at Medina, and it was expected that the reinforcements mentioned above would arrive within a week or two.

Not many days ago the postal convoy was attacked on the road between this and Medina and the whole of the mails robbed. The Post Office now forwards mails to Medina viâ Suez and Damascus.

On the 25th instant a report was received from Hodeidah to the effect that the Arabs in the Tehama had risen at the instigation of the Mahdi of Sabyeah, Seyyid Ali-el-Idrisee (referred to in my despatch from Hodeidah No. 12/E of the 14th April, 1909), and that great anxiety was being displayed by the local authorities at the rapid progress the revolt appeared to be making.

The scene of the disturbance was at first confined to the Zaidyia district, north of Hodeidah, where Arabs of the Suleil and Beni Kais clans between the 15th and 17th August attacked a convoy *en route* to Hujjur, killed ten men and an officer and took eleven camels laden with provisions. They then attacked and captured the military store depôt at Suk-el-Husseib, that serves the important garrisons stationed in the Hujjeh and El-Hujjur districts.

In the meantime, another body of the rebels had invested a place called Reiga, north of Zaidyia and the stronghold of Boni Pasha, the principal sheikh in that district.

A Turkish force which the above-mentioned sheikh accompanied marched against the investors, but were obliged to retreat after incurring severe loss. The Arabs took Reiga and practically razed the village to the ground, sacking and then setting fire to the house of Boni Pasha from which they extracted a quantity of Mausers, arms and ammunition. The sheikh's son was killed in the fighting that took place.

On the 17th instant, thirty-three regulars arrived in Hodeidah from Reiga in a pitiful plight, the greater number of them being wounded.

The insurgents then advanced on Kahaous in the south that fell to their onslaught, and subsequently turned their attention towards Zaidyia that is in danger, owing to the small garrison stationed there.

Loheia on the sea coast, about seventy miles north of Hodeidah, is also threatened, and the officials and the Indian traders are preparing to evacuate the town.

According to information received from the vice-consulate, it would appear that Hodeidah is the objective of the insurgents' movement, where there are not more than 400 soldiers and six guns.

The authorities are, naturally very much concerned about the safety of the town, and are making preparations to repel any attack from the north, and have armed several hundreds of the inhabitants. It is, however, feared that the Zerenceh tribesmen in the south that are still suffering from the sting of the chastisement meted out to them during the punitive expedition in February and March last, might take advantage of the present state of affairs and enter and sack Hodeidah.

The vali has telegraphed to Constantinople for reinforcements. In the meantime, four battalions of infantry from Sana'a under Lieutenant-Colonel Jamal Bey have been moved towards Zaidyia to deal with the rebels in that quarter.

With, &c.
G. A. RICHARDSON.

Inclosure 2 in No. 23.

Acting Consul Richardson to Sir G. Lowther.

Jeddah, October 2, 1909.

(Telegraphic.) P.

THE littoral between Cunfida and Hodeidah is blockaded by four Turkish warships, and General Rifaat Pasha is operating in the district of Loheia with six battalions, reinforced by some 1,800 regulars arrived recently from Asia Minor. At Zahra, north of Loheia, a small Turkish force is invested.

It is rumoured that the Pretender has taken to flight, and the situation does not

appear to me to be serious, though my information is scanty. In fact, the suppression of the rising seems to be near.

The rising has spread to Assyr, where the insurgents, by the capture of Makhaill, have cleverly cut off the capital, containing seven battalions, from the coast.

[37540] No. 24.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 14.)

(No. 815.)

Sir, *Constantinople, October 2, 1909.*

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith a despatch from His Majesty's consular officers at Bagdad and Adrianople respectively, which show the disappointing lack of industrial and administrative progress effected in those widely separated vilayets of the Empire since the re-establishment of the constitution.

I have, &c.

GERARD LOWTHER.

Inclosure 1 in No. 24.

Lieutenant-Colonel Ramsay to Sir G. Lowther.

Sir, *Bagdad, September 1, 1909.*

I HAVE the honour to forward for your Excellency's information and consideration a copy of a memorandum which has been given to me by a British merchant having many years of commercial experience in Bagdad. The memorandum points out the futility of attempting to develop this part of the Turkish Empire without the aid of foreign capital and foreign management. I entirely agree with all that the writer has said, and I believe that a considerable amount of local capital would be invested in local enterprises of various kinds if they were allowed to be managed by Englishmen.

2. Even looking at things from the point of view of a Mahommedan Turkish Government it is difficult to see that it is to their interest to do anything to exclude foreign capital and management, for such commercial ability and capital as exists in Turkey is, I understand, to be found among the Jews, Greeks, and Armenians, and foreigners can probably be much more safely trusted not to intrigue against the Mahommedan Government than can any of the races named.

I have, &c.

J. RAMSAY, *Lieutenant-Colonel, Political Resident in Turkish Arabia, and His Britannic Majesty's Consul-General, Bagdad.*

Inclosure 2 in No. 24.

Memorandum respecting Foreign Capital in Mesopotamia.

UNDER the old Hamidian regime we foreign merchants in Mesopotamia enjoyed a large measure of liberty. We were absolutely free to trade where and with whom we pleased, and if the Government did not actually encourage us in our trade relations, it was at least always willing to assist us when trouble arose. The dark side of the picture was the fact that anything out of the ordinary trading run was looked on with great disfavour. We were free to trade, but nothing more, and it was useless to think of investing capital in the country in the large commercial enterprises, as the moment any step was taken in this direction obstruction from the Government was sure to be met with, and it was hopeless to contend with this obstruction as it was directed from Constantinople, and was the fixed policy of the Central Government. When the new regime came in many of us thought, "Our long period of marking time is now over, we will at last be permitted to take that share in the development of the country to which our long residence, our interest and belief in the country entitle us. If we have not capital ourselves we will persuade our friends in Europe who have capital to invest it in various enterprises in this country in the future of which we have so much faith."

We have been bitterly disappointed. The new Government professes on every

occasion its desire to develop the country; numerous schemes for various enterprises have been put forward and have received Government support, but in every case the condition has been made that the entire ownership and management must be vested in the hands of Turkish subjects. Up to the present, practically every scheme has been abortive. Our native friends have come to us with many of the schemes, they have asked our help, but the matter has always been blocked by the before-mentioned condition; permission to work any concession being given only on the condition that foreigners are given no share in the management or ownership. For this reason Mesopotamia stands absolutely where it did in the days of the old régime. It is true that there is nothing to prevent loans of money to the promoters of different enterprises, but it is impossible to tempt capital into the country on those conditions. Capitalists know that investments in Mesopotamia are not without risk; they may be willing to take the risks if they have the chance of making the profits, but they will not take the risk for a mere interest return. It is futile to think that the country can be developed on native capital. In the first place there is not enough of it, and in the second place the idea of co-operative enterprise has no attraction for the native mind. There is probably in all the world no keener or more intelligent individual trader than the Arab merchant, but to this individual trading he almost invariably strictly limits himself. Trading partnerships are the exception, and even the members of the old Arab trading families prefer to work alone and be bound by no partnership ties, even with their blood relations. Under these circumstances there is absolutely no prospect of unaided native enterprise finding the capital required for the co-operative enterprises necessary to the development of the country.

If the country is to advance the only thing to be done is to encourage in every way possible the entry of foreign capital. Every restriction should be removed; foreigners should be encouraged to acquire property rights and to invest in commercial undertakings of every description. When irrigation comes there will be openings in every direction; light railways, tramways, steamers, grain elevators, rice and flour mills, water and light supplies, all these things and many more will be required—many of them, indeed, will be absolutely necessary, and they can only come if foreign capital is encouraged to enter the field. It might possibly be made a stipulation that native capital be given every chance to co-operate in such enterprises. This could be easily arranged by the opening of subscription lists of companies in the districts in which they are to operate. Native capital would soon in this way become educated, it would lose its distrust of co-operative enterprise, and would doubtless in time be led to take independent action. Even now the native trader knows well what successes can be made by co-operative action. He, however, distrusts his own and his compatriots' powers of organisation and management, but when he sees experienced foreigners leading the way he will be quick to follow, and in time will (as has happened in other countries) become a leader in his own land.

Bagdad, August 31, 1909.

Inclosure 3 in No. 24.

Consul Samson to Sir G. Lowther.

(No. 63.)

Sir, *Adrianople, September 30, 1909.*

I HAVE the honour to forward, for the information of your Excellency, the following report on the political and administrative state of the vilayet for the quarter ended this day.

Political State.—There appears to be little of importance to chronicle under this heading as regards events, and this state of affairs is the usual one at the present season of the year, when the greater part of the inhabitants of the vilayet are busy with their harvest and have but little time to devote to other matters. Public interest has centred chiefly in the question of the future of Crete.

Your Excellency is already aware, from previous despatches of this Consulate on the subject, that a meeting in connection with the matter was held here on the 11th August. Similar meetings were held in the chief towns of the vilayet, such as Kirkkilisse, Keshan, Kirjali, and Gumuljina, on or about that date. The committee seem to have thoroughly worked up the population by telling them that a portion of their country was about to be taken from them, with the result that feeling ran high in the matter. Subsequent events have necessarily had a calming influence, but I

gathered that amongst the better educated classes the danger is not yet considered to be over. These view with a good deal of suspicion the recent movement in Greece for the improvement of the army. As was natural, a good deal of animosity was felt against the Greeks during July and August, but this does not seem to have been openly expressed, the committee being anxious to avoid any appearance of disunion of races amongst Ottomans.

Within the past few days the question of the return to their villages of Bulgarian refugees from the Kirkkilisse district has again come into prominence, and a certain number of these have already been permitted to cross the frontier. The moment for their return is well chosen, since ploughing in preparation for the winter sowings is just commencing. The Turkish authorities are likely to experience considerable difficulty in dealing with these people should they return in large numbers, as many of their farms are already occupied by Turkish immigrants who will naturally resent giving them up. A deputation of peasants from the frontier village of Lahana Pashakeui yesterday called at this consulate to inform me that they had been unable to obtain possession of their farms on returning from Bulgaria. I told him that the matter was at present engaging the attention of the authorities here, as is the case.

In the course of a conversation which I had with Arif Pasha, who was then Vali of Adrianople, during the autumn of 1906, he assured me that the tenancy by Turkish immigrants of the lands of Bulgarian absentees was not intended to be of a permanent nature, but that rents were being paid for these lands, and that the balance, after deducting the amount due for taxes, would be paid to the owners on their return to Turkey. Personally I have never met with an instance where land was thus rented. My Bulgarian colleague is of opinion that the only solution of the difficulty is to be found in the handing over to the Turkish Government of the property of all Bulgarian absentees which is at present occupied by Turks, against the payment of compensation, and it appears not unlikely that he will recommend to his Government the adoption of such a course.

As regards the enlistment of Christians in the army, the only step taken has been the registration of the names of a few young men of each race who are now liable for service. With the exception of Xanthi, details of which I have already furnished to your Excellency, there has been no alteration in the status of the churches of the vilayet. I understand, however, that a number of villages in the Vize district have made formal application for the allotment to them of Bulgarian priests and schoolmasters.

Administrative state.—It cannot be said that the administration of this province has shown any improvement during the past quarter. At Adrianople itself, indeed, matters have rather grown worse, and a state bordering on confusion at present prevails in the Government offices. Most of the heads of Departments are new to their work, and the greatest difficulty is experienced in the transaction of the simplest business. Whilst this is doubtless partly due to the change of officials, it must also be in part attributed to slackness on the part of Rechid Pasha, the ex-vali, who would appear latterly to have become discouraged at the lack of support which his efforts towards the amelioration of the affairs at the vilayet received from Constantinople. He has at various times during his tenure of office here complained to me of the impossibility of making any real progress in administrative matters, so long as even the most unimportant affairs had to be referred to the capital for decision. He, appears to have latterly exhibited a strange lack of authority. On one occasion, whilst presiding at a meeting of the Provincial Assembly, a Hoja entered the room and informed him that he and the inhabitants of the village of Evjiler absolutely refused to abide by the decision of the law courts in the matter of a dispute between themselves and the village of Mustratli, and that he refused to recognize his authority. The vali does not appear to have been equal to dealing satisfactorily with the Hoja, and signally failed to uphold his authority. It is therefore hardly to be wondered at that the circulation in the country districts of such a tale should result in a considerable relaxation of discipline, indeed this has already borne fruit in the shape of an attack by the villagers of Evjiler, who are Turks, upon the Bulgarian inhabitants of Mustratli. The transfer of Rechid Pasha from Adrianople to the Archipelago, and his replacement by Adil Bey, would, however, appear to have been brought about by the influence of Abdullah Pasha, commanding the second army, with whom he had disagreed. Such disagreements were of constant occurrence in the past, and I understand that this was the main reason for the appointment of the late Arif Pasha to the joint post of Governor and Commander-in-chief here.

The most hopeful sign in connection with loyal administration has been the appointment of a considerable number of fresh mutessarifs and kaimakams, who have

replaced the worst of the old officials. In discussing this matter with Rechid Pasha prior to his departure, I pointed out to him the great importance of having capable officials as Mutessarif of Kirkkilisse and Kaimakam of Tirnovojik respectively, and asked him whether he considered what the present holders of those offices could be fairly thus described. He agreed that they could not, and promised to use his influence to have them replaced. In view of the return to those districts of Bulgarian refugees, I venture to express to your Excellency my conviction that had replacing of the officials in question by suitable persons cannot but be for the benefit of the vilayet. It is most unfortunate that at the present moment this district should be suffering from the effect of so disastrous a harvest. For a period of five months there has been practically no rain throughout this vilayet, and crops seem to have failed nearly everywhere, tobacco, cereals, and grapes having been all affected. Reports which I have received from the agricultural department here, supplemented by my own observations, lead me to believe that the yield of cereals will only amount to about 40 per cent. of that of an ordinary year. Arrangements are, I understand, being made for the importation by the Government of a large quantity of seed which has been purchased chiefly in Russia, and which is to be distributed to the peasants. I am not at present aware of the terms on which this distribution is to be made, but should repayment for seed issued be required by the Government, this will need to be spread out over a large number of years, since instalments are still due from agriculturists for seed issued in the year 1907 under similar circumstances, some 70 per cent. of which I believe to be still outstanding. Happily a little rain has fallen within the past ten days, which has enabled ploughing for winter sowings to be begun. It is to be hoped therefore that the distribution of seed may not be long delayed, as it will be required very shortly.

The anniversary of the re-establishment of the Constitution was celebrated at Adrianople by a march past of the troops in garrison and by a parade of trade guilds and schools. The town was decorated, but I am informed that no great amount of enthusiasm was displayed.

In pursuance of the recently enacted law relating to associations and clubs, the authorities here attempted during the month of July to obtain a fusion of the various Turkish, Greek, Armenian, and Bulgarian clubs existing in this town. The chief Greek club gave a dinner, which was attended by members of the other institutions, at which the matter was discussed. The authorities also invited the various schools to a children's fête in the Serai gardens, but all these demonstrations were barren of result, and the clubs still continue.

The civilian branch of the Union and Progress Club seems likely to be closed, the ostensible reason being the non-payment of subscriptions by its members.

Military Matters.—Four battalions of infantry, together with a battery of mountain artillery, have been dispatched during the past quarter from this vilayet to the Yemen. There has also been a small redistribution of field artillery. Contracts for the erection of new barracks at Adrianople, Rodosto, and Dedeagach have been placed. The revision of grades of officers has resulted in considerable change here amongst the senior ranks, but brigade and divisional commanders still retain their posts. The most important case is that of Ali Riza Pasha, Chief of the staff, who has been reduced from the rank of ferik to that of kaimakam, and has in consequence resigned his appointment, having been granted leave to travel in Germany.

Public Health.—There has been a considerable epidemic of scarlet fever and diphtheria in Adrianople during the quarter, and the mortality amongst children has been considerable.

I have, &c.
L. L. R. SAMSON, *Major.*

[37546] No. 25.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(*Received October 11.*)

(No. 821.)

Sir, *Constantinople, October 6, 1909.*

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith a despatch from Mr. Chafy, His Majesty's acting vice-consul at Adana, reporting on the feeling of insecurity there and upon further events in the vilayet.

I have, &c.
GERARD LOWTHER.

Inclosure in No. 25.

Acting Vice-Consul Chafy to Sir G. Lowther.

(No. 41.)

Sir, *Adana, September 29, 1909.*

I HAVE the honour to report the following items of news. Rumours of fresh trouble in Adana—probably at Hainan—have been persistently circulating, or circulated, during the last few days. The shattered nervous system of the Christians of Adana is now ripe for wholesale panic. The merest accident would suffice to produce it. Yesterday the dragomans of the Russian, German, and Austrian consulates called on me collectively to ask my advice on the situation.

The Christians are being frightened by the usual stories. Here an old and trusted servant is dismissed by his Moslem employer, who refuses to be responsible for his safety should "events" occur; there an Armenian woman overhears khojas talking massacre in the street; the girls at the American Mission School are terrified by the alarming talk of a man from Hamidieh, &c.

I endeavoured to allay the fears of the dragomans, and dissuaded them from making formal representations to the conak, especially urging the unwisdom of their trying to defer the departure of the vali (to-day) on his tour in the districts. I am convinced that the babblings of a collection of frightened Greek dragomans would do more harm than good, and certainly not cause the vali to alter his plans.

I had a friendly talk with the vali myself yesterday afternoon, and hinted at the advisability of taking steps to restore the public peace of mind. The rumour had not been excluded from the conak.

It is extremely difficult to probe the origin of panics of this kind, and to judge impartially the diametrically opposed views of the different elements.

Having in this case considered both the Christian and the Turkish views on the situation, I adhere to my original conviction that there is no danger at all (or I should naturally have wired to your Excellency before this).

I have not been able to obtain one single reliable proof of danger, and, apart from all other considerations, there are too many Young Turkish officers here with fine reputations in the making to render possible a repetition of the events which took place under such widely different circumstances last April. It would hardly do for Djemal Bey to express satisfaction at the idea of Djevad Bey dangling at the end of a rope (he did so to the American consul) and then to go off on the jaunt, leaving Adana exposed to a fresh massacre.

Your Excellency will best be able to judge of the probability of this panic being deliberately engineered by some party or other anxious to advance their own interests. The present situation here—the nervousness habitual to Adana at the approach of Bairam, the recent decisions of Ismail Fazil's court-martial and their results, the uneasy suspense pending the execution of Moslems, &c.—would certainly seem to lend itself to intrigues of this kind. Possibly the Armenian Patriarch, for one, would not regard as unwelcome a justification of his attitude in the shape of apparently renewed audacity on the part of the savages of the Adana massacres.

My duty is to report the facts as they are brought to my notice. It is certain that mischievous paragraphs have lately found their way into the press. The "Echo de Paris" quotes a message from the "Daily Telegraph's" Constantinople correspondent to the effect that fresh trouble is brewing at Adana; and most dangerous stuff is appearing in one of the Arabic papers.

Meanwhile Adana is still outwardly the quietest and best-behaved of provincial towns. The first indication of genuine danger shall be at once reported to your Excellency.

I have further the honour to report that trouble has been caused by the Moslem prisoners detained in connection with the massacres. Ihsan Fikri and Ismail Safa, the firebrands of the notorious "Fidai," are responsible for a round robin sent by these prisoners to Constantinople, protesting against the injustice of releasing the Armenians and leaving them to languish in gaol.

The vali has taken prompt action in this affair, and Ihsan Fikri and his satellites are to be at once removed from Adana. It was madness ever to leave them so long within reach of pens and paper and an audience.

The vali, having borrowed my horse for the occasion, starts on his tour in the districts to-day. He expects to be absent a week or ten days. I do not know his exact itinerary, but it is to include Erzin, where, I imagine, matters other than those

connected with relief will claim his attention. He told me in this connection that probably only two of the reported condemnations to death of Armenians are to take effect. I think they are those in connection with the murder of the Circassian chief at Hajin.

With regard to the change of mutessarifs at Mersina, a good deal of astonishment is expressed at the removal (obviously in some degree of disgrace) of Essad Reouf Bey. It seems certain that he offended the Young Turks by his attitude at the time of the investigations of the massacre. Otherwise I have always heard him most highly spoken of, and it is certain that he saved Mersina from massacre. On leaving Mersina for Mousli he is reported to have addressed a small crowd which was seeing him off in the following words:—

"I am sorry to leave Mersina, because I had some real and sincere friends here. During my short stay I regret that I did practically nothing for the place, but I can boast of not having plunged it into ruin."

His departure is much regretted by the Christian population of Mersina.

The arrival of his successor, Leon Nasri Bey, appears to have been subjected to some delay—some say by the action of Djemal Bey, which hardly seems probable. Leon Nasri is a Syrian Christian, was formerly muavvin at Adana and at Smyrna (besides having held a consular appointment in Russia), and is married to a Russian. No particular enthusiasm for his new appointment is expressed by those who know him.

The new military Mutessarif of Selefkie is an old friend of the Vali of Adana.

Djemal Bey continues to work with unabated vigour. It is a pity that he is a trifle too optimistic and premature in his announcements of reforms. The "man in the bazaar" calls him "reclameji" and "boyaji" (the dauber in bright colours). But his sincerity is above question.

His orphanage scheme is, as I hinted in my last despatch, meeting with opposition. His ill-wishers are making it the opportunity for attack. The help of Hussein Djahid and the "Tanin" are enlisted in its favour.

In view of the many inaccurate press reports which abound on this and kindred subjects the vali is authorising one or two reliable correspondents here to print first-hand accounts of his aims. M. Stanislas Kozlovski, a Polish Austrian subject employed as an engineer on the Bagdad Railway and a member of the relief commission, is to-day sending to "La Turquie" and "Stamboul" an interview with Djemal Bey. The maktubji of the vilayet, Hakki Benieh Bey, is to be his mouthpiece in the Turkish press.

A famous Kurdish brigand named Abdino, who has for years terrorised a district in this vilayet, and who recently robbed Dr. Shepard, an American missionary doctor, has been captured by troops and is to be hung.

I have, &c.
R. E. W. CHAFY.

[37805] No. 26.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Lowther.

(No. 678.)

(Telegraphic.) P. *Foreign Office, October 12, 1909.*

TIGRIS and Euphrates navigation.

After my communication to Lynch, reported in my telegram No. 677 of the 9th October, Lynch on the same day decided to accept proposal of the Porte, and instructed his agent to that effect. Other British firms are approaching us with a view to obtaining the concession. Has a decision been arrived at by Council of Ministers?

[37930] No. 27.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received October 13.)

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of Viscount Morley, forwards

herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of a telegram to the Viceroy, dated the 6th October, relative to the report of the intended cession of Mokha to Germany.

India Office, October 12, 1909.

Inclosure in No. 27.

Viscount Morley to Government of India.

(Telegraphic.) P. *India Office, October* 6, 1909.

PLEASE refer to second paragraph of my telegram dated the 8th September Grand Vizier has informed Sir G. Lowther that there is no foundation for report that it is intended to cede Mokha to Germany. Place is unsuited for coaling station in the opinion of the Admiralty.

[37954] No. 28.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 13.)

(No. 342.)

(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, October* 13, 1909.

LYNCH concession.

Referring to your telegram No. 678, Lynch having now communicated his acceptance to the Minister of Public Works, the latter is engaged in drawing up the actual text of the concession convention. Though some delay may arise in obtaining final signature owing to the absence of some of the Ministers and the Bairam fêtes, the matter can now, I hope, be considered as settled.

[38351] No. 29.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 18.)

(No. 827.)

Sir, *Constantinople, October* 6, 1909.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 794 of the 19th ultimo, I have the honour to forward herewith a despatch from His Majesty's vice-consul at Kharput, reporting delay in beginning the projected road construction at Khozat, in the Dersim district.

I have, &c.

GERARD LOWTHER.

Inclosure in No. 29.

Acting Vice-Consul Rawlins to Sir G. Lowther.

(No. 49.)

Sir, *Kharput, September* 23, 1909.

WITH regard to my recent despatches bearing on the subject of road-making in the Dersim, I have the honour to report that matters are not being pushed forward as expeditiously as they might be.

Not only has the mushir left Khozat for Erzinjian, but the vali has also abandoned his intention of going to superintend the road-making operations.

Up to the present moment, although a few engineers are at Khozat, and some money for road-making purposes has already been received, no definite commencement has been made.

All that has been done is the appointment of a "commission" for the purpose of superintending the work at Khozat.

The "commission" is composed of three members, two Moslems of Kezereh and one Armenian, the latter to act as clerk.

The members of the commission all receive salaries, the Moslem members 2,000 piastres and 1,000 piastres respectively, and the Armenian clerk 1,000 piastres monthly. Although it was reported in the "Official Gazette" of the vilayet about three weeks ago that the commission had already left for Khozat, the real date of their

departure was only yesterday. It is also much to be feared that the members of the commission, who know nothing about road-making, will simply stay in Khozat till next summer, drawing their salaries without helping on the work in any way.

It must be remembered also that it is now Ramazan, when no work is carried on, and that in a few weeks the rains and snow will put an end to any idea of road-making in the Dersim until next spring or summer.

The view held by the majority of people here is that this Erzinjian–Khozat–Kezereh road is simply a "paper" undertaking, and that nobody will be benefited except the members of the commission.

This view, in my humble opinion, is ultra-pessimistic, and although the vali is showing a rather remarkable lack of energy in the matter, there is no doubt that this road will be made before a year or two, provided always that no unforeseen difficulties occur.

Arrangements are still slowly being made for the registration of Christians liable for service in the army, but this matter is, like most other things in this vilayet, in its most elementary stage.

I have, &c.

E. C. DONALDSON RAWLINS.

[38353] No. 30.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 18.)

(No. 832.)

Sir, *Constantinople, October* 8, 1909.

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith a despatch from His Majesty's consul at Aleppo reporting the urgent necessity of funds for the reconstruction of roofs of houses gutted by fire during the massacre at Kessab, and the distribution of relief to the survivors.

I have, &c.

GERARD LOWTHER.

Inclosure in No. 30.

Consul Fontana to Sir G. Lowther.

(No. 25.)

Sir, *Aleppo, September* 25, 1909.

WITH reference to my telegram to your Excellency of the 21st instant reporting the urgent need for roofing over and rendering habitable during the coming winter the houses gutted by fire at Kessab and in the neighbouring hamlets, and for the redistribution of wheat for daily bread among the more destitute of the villagers, I now have the honour to submit the following short report upon the condition of the looted villages and the needs of their inhabitants.

Kessab is the largest of a group of eleven Armenian villages and hamlets, the total population of which, before the disturbances last April, numbered from 7,000 to 8,000 souls. Now, however, owing to death by violence and more especially from disease and to the emigration of not a few families to Cyprus or to America, the population cannot greatly exceed 6,000. One hundred and sixty-three villagers were killed, either in their villages or elsewhere in the district; 516 houses and 64 shops were burnt and gutted in the eleven villages. Among these Kessab, Cayajuk, Dussada, and Ekisluk suffered most heavily by fire.

Calladoran, a village on the sea, distant two hours from Kessab, suffered no loss. The bands, which collected at Ourdeh, three hours from Kessab, with the approval and encouragement of the mudir, advanced during the night on Kessab, hoping to take it by surprise. At the suggestion, however, of Padre Sabatino, a Franciscan monk there, large bonfires had been lighted on the heights around the village which caused the bands to halt and await the daylight.

At dawn the Armenians—men, women, and children—started across the Jebel-el-Akra for Suedia, where only the timely arrival of His Majesty's ship "Triumph" saved them from massacre. After the flight of the Armenians from Kessab the bands entered and completely plundered the village, the looting lasting several days. They then burnt nearly all the houses and withdrew, driving away with them all the village horses, cattle, and goats. Kessab was a prosperous and beautifully situated village,

composed of two-storied houses well and solidly constructed, backed by the Jebel-el-Akra and embedded in sloping gardens of mulberry-trees and patches of vineyard.

On their return to Kessab after restoration of order the Armenians found that all that remained of their homes were four blackened walls enclosing piles of cinders and rubbish. Redifs were called out for the protection of the ruined village and villagers. Many of those redifs had themselves taken part in the sack of Kessab, and they told the people that they regretted to have left alive any Christians there to require protection. They were afterwards replaced by regular troops under command of a captain, who showed great kindness to the sufferers and helped them as best he could. Dysentery broke out among the half-starved Armenians, but, thanks to the generous and prompt aid received from the International Relief Committee and the American Red Cross Society, and also from Catholic sources, the epidemic soon abated.

The authorities started distribution of wheat through the mukhtars, each destitute person receiving, nominally, 200 drams daily, but, in reality, not more than 50 or 100 drams. Small sums of money were also distributed from time to time. The wheat distribution ceased, however, on the 5th July last, and since then only the most meagre sums have been doled out at long intervals. At present there are in the eleven villages over 3,000 persons who have no supply of wheat or flour for their daily bread, about 1,600 who have sufficient wheat for another three weeks, and only 500 who have enough for six or seven weeks. There was hardly any local wheat harvest this year, and the people have consumed even the little grain they had reserved for sowing. The yield of silk, the chief industry of the Kessab district, entirely failed, the silk-worms dying out or being destroyed after the precipitate flight of the villagers. Unless the distribution of wheat is reopened and continued through the winter months, and something is done to provide the homeless with a roof over their heads, the torrential rains of December, January, and February will prove deadly to the shelterless and starving people. The Kessab Relief Commission, composed of local Protestants, Catholics, Gregorians and Latins, under the presidency of Miss Chambers, an American missionary who has passed three years at Kessab, and has done most admirable work there since the disturbances on behalf of the International Relief Committee and the Red Cross Society, have made a careful estimate of the sums needed to reroof and render just habitable the burnt and gutted houses and shops. According to their estimate an average of 25*l.* per building, or about 15,000*l.* in all, would suffice for the purpose in question. In view of the size of the houses and the complete lack of timber in the locality itself this estimate appeared to me a very moderate one. An estimate made by the Kaimakam of Jessir, who was recently at Kessab, is said to have been far higher. The nearest place to Kessab where timber is to be procured is Mersina, whence it would have to be shipped to Calladoran, and transported to Kessab by the villagers on the few horses they have recovered since the disorders.

It is suggested that a ship-load of timber might be purchased at Beirout, or that the Government might contract with some firm of timber merchants to ship the amount of timber required to Calladoran. The Batoum timber appears unsuitable for building purposes, otherwise a ship-load might be purchased cheaply at that port. (It may be well to mention that the roofing of village houses in these parts consists in horizontal beams covered with thin planking or brushwood supporting a thick layer of beaten-down earth.) In any case the question of providing shelter for the homeless against the winter rains and storms is a vital one, and the work must be begun without delay if it is to be of any wide value.

Should money for reroofing and planking over the empty window spaces be lacking, temporary sheds might be run up, each sufficing for so many families, or, at the worst, the military authorities might provide soldiers' tents in sufficient numbers to shelter the homeless. These tents, well set up in the gardens, and trenched round, would shield the people from the drenching rains. I cannot too earnestly submit that whatever is to be done in this matter should be determined and set about at once. If reroofing is decided upon, it is suggested that the International Relief and the Red Cross Societies might be able to contribute 5,000*l.*, provided the Ottoman Government furnish 10,000*l.* down, so that the work start forthwith. The winter cold and rains of Kessab are trying at the best of times, and cannot fail to prove fatal to hundreds of men, women, and children, if both underfed and roofless, however hardy they may naturally be.

Cotton for 1,000 beds and 1,200 quilts—each bed to accommodate two or three adults or several children—is required, and the sum of 1,200*l.* has been applied for by Miss Chambers to the relief committees for that purpose. Over 500 infants at the breast have died since the return of the fugitives to their villages, owing to the deterioration of the milk caused by the shock of fear or by fatigue and privation. The mortality amongst older children has also been very high.

The Mudir of Kessab, an Arab, has lately shown a desire to meddle with Miss Chambers's relief work, and it might be salutary for him to receive an intimation that he should refrain from interference of any kind, and should lend every assistance in his power when his assistance may be asked for.

I have, &c.
RAPHAEL A. FONTANA.

[38355] No. 31.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 18.)

(No. 831.)

Sir, *Constantinople, October 8, 1909.*

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith a despatch from Dr. Richardson, Acting British Consul at Jeddah, reporting on the improved state of affairs in the Yemen.

I have, &c.
CHARLES M. MARLING.

Enclosure in No. 31.

Acting Consul Richardson to Sir G. Lowther.

(No. 48.)

Sir, *Jeddah, September 23, 1909.*

I HAVE the honour to confirm my cablegram of the 5th instant reporting, on the strength of information received from the acting viceconsul at Hodeidah, that the situation in the Yemen had improved and that the state of things was quieter.

The following particulars regarding the Arab rising in the Tehama, north of Hodeidah, reached me by the post a few days ago :—

I am led to believe, from the accounts received from my dragoman at Hodeidah, that the rising instigated by Seyyid Mahomed-el-Idrisee (wrongly called Seyyid Ali-el-Idrisee in previous reports) originated virtually with the intention on the part of the tribesmen to crush the power and baneful influence, exercised in the Zaidyia district, of one Boni Pasha, a notorious and powerful Arab sheikh in that locality, and cannot be said to have been an organized attempt to overthrow Ottoman power and rule in the Tehama of the Yemen.

It would appear that during the month of July last, Arabs from the clans of Beni Kais, Beni Saifan, Beni Masood, Beni-el-Abd, and Beni Huff, inhabiting the country north of Hodeidah and between Zaidyia and El Hujjeh, visited the Idrisee at Sabyeah.

The Sheikh of Beni Huff complained to Seyyid Mahomed about the exactions levied and illegally appropriated by Boni Pasha on camels laden with coffee and skins and other produce *en route* to Hodeidah, and that traversed the territory of the above-mentioned clans. He (the sheikh) represented that his ancestors had been from time immemorial the recognised heads of these clans, and that the tax on camels ought to be paid him, instead of to Boni Pasha, who, it may be mentioned, has the support of the Ottoman authorities that are cognisant of the exactions levied by him.

Seyyid Mahomed-el-Idrisee decided that one-third of the revenue accruing from the transit dues on camels laden with merchandise and passing through the country inhabited by the tribesmen referred to above, should fall to the sheikh of the El Huff tribe, and that the remainder should be divided amongst the chiefs of the other clans interested, with the proviso that they would guarantee the security of the route leading to Hussein and El Hujjeh.

A proclamation was then issued by the Idrisee, dismissing Boni Pasha from the post of principal sheikh in the Zaidyia district, which was published at Reign, the headquarters of Boni Pasha. Tribesmen who disobeyed the injunctions of Seyyid Mahomed-el-Idrisee were threatened with severe punishment.

On hearing about the above proclamation, the kinsmen of the above notable (Boni Pasha) and a strong following took up arms against the Beni Huff and advanced against it, but were worsted in the fighting that ensued and were obliged to retreat and take back with them the small Turkish force that guarded the Turkish military store at Reign.

The above circumstances started the present conflagration.

Other tribesmen, learning of the success achieved by the Beni Hufj against Boni Pasha's adherents, rose and joined in the rebellion. Amongst the former were the Beni Kais, that attacked and captured Zaidyia and other towns, as has already been reported.

The local authorities apparently misunderstood the object of this inter-tribal rising, and naturally took action to support the deposed and defeated Boni Pasha, whereupon the Idrisee proclaimed a "jehad" against the Turks.

I understand that the Arabs inhabiting the littoral between Cumfuda and Midi have declared in favour of Seyyid Mahomed, and have joined the Idrisee banner. The Turkish officials at the coastal and neighbouring inland towns that have very small garrisons are preparing to vacate their posts and proceed to Hodeidah.

On the 23rd August it was reported that the Arab rebels were approaching Loheia from the north, that they had completely overrun, which caused the kaimakam of that place and other officials to quit the town, as no military assistance appeared to be forthcoming.

Much anxiety existed about this time with regard to the fate of Hodeidah, where there were barely 400 troops.

The mutessarif of the district expressed the worst fears with reference to the situation when interviewed by the consular corps at Hodeidah, as it was uncertain when the reinforcements asked for would arrive from Constantinople.

He seemed to approve of the action of the Italian consul-general at Hodeidah and our acting vice-consul when they intimated to him that they proposed to telegraph to their respective Governments asking that a ship of war might be sent to Hodeidah to protect the lives and property of foreigners in certain eventualities.

On receiving a cablogram from Mr. Tayar informing me of the gravity of the situation in the neighbourhood of Hodeidah and of the inability of the local Government to guarantee the safety of British subjects should the rebels continue their march on Hodeidah, I suggested to your Excellency that one of His Majesty's ships of war be deputed to visit Hodeidah and watch the situation.

On the 23rd August, the Turkish troops at Zahra, near Bajl, killed Shereef Mansoor, a sheikh possessing great influence in that locality, in order to prevent him from stirring the Arabs to join in the "Idrisee" movement.

Lieutenant-Colonel Shouki Bey, who had been dispatched from Beit-el-Fakih with two battalions of infantry, drawn from different outposts in the Hodeidah sanjak, advanced via Bajl about this time, and succeeded in entering Zaidyia on the 28th August, after suffering some loss.

The sheikhs of Soleil hastened to tender their submission to Shouki Bey, but demanded the banishment of Boni Pasha, who had already been recalled to Hodeidah, where he is now detained.

The Italian cruiser "Volturno" anchored off Hodeidah on the 25th August, having been dispatched there at the request of the local consul-general. She paid a flying visit to Salif and Camaran, but has since returned and is lying in the roadstead.

According to the latest information received by me (communication with Hodeidah is difficult, and intelligence regarding Yemen is scanty at Jeddah) it would appear that the backbone of the revolt in the Zaidyia district has been broken, and all danger of attack on Hodeidah or Loheia removed, at least for the present.

Seyyid Mahomed-el-Idrisee, on the other hand, who is eliciting the support of the population in the Sabyeah district and of the tribesman inhabiting the country adjacent to the eastern Yemen littoral, is reported to be very active.

There is fighting going on in the Hajjeh and Hujjur cazas also.

Rumours have been current locally that the insurrection in the northern Yemen has extended to the province of Assyr, and that the governor, Suleman Pasha, has been killed at Abha, the capital, which is supposed to be invested by the rebels.

I have failed to obtain confirmation of the latter intelligence.

The Ottoman vessels, "Abdul Kadir" and "Bahr-el-Jadid," passed through Jeddah some ten days ago *en route* to Hodeidah, with about 1,500 troops to reinforce the Yemen Army Corps.

The governor-general of the Yemen, Ferik Hassan Tahsin Pasha, I am informed, has issued a printed proclamation in which the inhabitants of the Tehama are warned against associating themselves with the cause of Seyyid Mahomed-el-Idrisee, who is described therein as a weak and powerless pretender. The proclamation further denounces the Idrisee as a fraud, who practises on the ignorance of innocent Moslems, who are therein informed that the miracles that the Seyyid is supposed to perform are but absurd tricks, effected with the aid of electrical appliances.

Several hundreds of circulars containing the vali's proclamation have been distributed amongst the Arab population at Bajl, Hodeidah, and other towns in the neighbourhood.

No information is forthcoming with reference to the whereabouts of the Turkish gunboats that it was stated the Porte had dispatched to the Red Sea from the Mediterranean.

The gunboat "Naushahr," that is stationed at Hodeidah as a rule, is lying off Loheia. The "Tashkabri," the only other Ottoman armed vessel in these waters, is anchored off this roadstead.

I have, &c.
G. A. RICHARDSON.

[38359] No. 32.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(*Received October* 18.)

(No. 838.)

Sir, *Therapia, October* 14, 1909.

IN consequence of a statement in one of the local papers this morning to the effect that Rifaat Pasha had been instructed to negotiate at Livadia with M. Isvolsky to obtain the abandonment by Russia of the preferential rights in the matter of the building of railways in Northern Asia Minor (see my despatch No. 533 of the 10th July), I asked the Grand Vizier to-day if he could tell me whether anything had been done.

His Highness replied that he could not answer definitely until he saw Rifaat Pasha on his return. I was, however, aware, he said, that the Russians were asking for a concession for the Danube–Adriatic line. If this were granted unconditionally the Austrian Government would inevitably return to the charge and demand a concession for the Mitrovitza Sanjak Railway. It had therefore suggested itself to him that, as there was no longer any desire to prevent Armenians from returning to Asia Minor, and that as thus one side of the bargain had fallen through, the Russians might be disposed to abandon their claim to the preferential rights for railway building in the Northern Asia Minor basin in return for the sanction of the Adriatic scheme. If this were done the Turkish Government would be in a position to resist the Austrian demand for the Mitrovitza concession, for which no *quid pro quo* would be forthcoming as in the case of Russia.

I have, &c.
GERARD LOWTHER.

[38360] No. 33.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(*Received October* 18.)

(No. 839.)

Sir, *Therapia, October* 14, 1909.

I ASKED the Grand Vizier to-day whether General Mahmoud Chefket Pasha had, while in Germany, had any official communication with the authorities on the subject of the future of the Bagdad Railway. His Highness said that the Emperor had strongly recommended the railway to the general's attention, but that he was unaware of his conversation having taken any definite shape. The Grand Vizier had, however, spoken with the general on the matter, and they were both of the opinion that some modification must be made in the present convention. When the line was completed the Turkish Government would be called upon to pay in kilometric guarantees a yearly sum of £T. 1,250,000. Granting that the railway earned 450,000*l.*, this would leave this Government saddled with a liability of 800,000*l.*, which was more than its finances could stand. His Highness said that he himself was in favour of a narrow-gauge line, but he believed that the military authorities were opposed to it, though the matter had not been examined with them, but he believed that a narrow gauge would mean a saving to the Ottoman Government of 400,000*l.* a-year in kilometric guarantees. He himself, he said, was in favour of an arrangement being come to between the German company and the English regarding the construction of the remaining sections of the line, and he had instructed General Mahmoud Chefket Pasha to broach the subject with the German Ambassador.

I have, &c.
GERARD LOWTHER.

[38364] No. 34.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 18.)

(No. 843.)

Sir, *Therapia, October 12, 1909.*

IN my despatch No. 767 of the 16th September last, I had the honour to inform you that the Gregorian Patriarch had handed in to the Sublime Porte his resignation, as a protest against the treatment which his flock was receiving at the hands of the Turkish authorities, more particularly in connection with the decisions given by the Adana courts-martial. As a result of the negotiations which have since the date of my above-mentioned despatch been pending between the Porte and the Patriarch, the former have made the concession of ordering the retrial of the Governor of Jebel-i-Bereket, and finally, at the beginning of the present week, have admitted the justice of some of his Beatitude's complaints, whilst declining to consider those which referred to matters of a purely judicial character, on the ground that under the new constitution, which grants equality to all Ottoman subjects before the law, the Patriarch only enjoys privileges in so far as strictly religious questions are concerned.

The Patriarch maintains that the sentence on the ex-vali, viz., of being placed *en disponibilité* for six years, is inadequate in the case of a man who, through his culpable negligence, was responsible for the loss of several thousand lives, and that it is not of a nature to spur other governors to act more energetically in the not improbable event of similar situations arising in the future in Anatolia. He is not in favour of hanging individual Turks or Armenians for acts committed during disorders which the vali and commandant should have prevented.

The Grand Vizier, the Sheikh-ul-Islam, and other members of the Cabinet have privately expressed the opinion that the sentences are inadequate, but declare that the court-martial's decision cannot be revised, and they have further challenged the right hitherto enjoyed by the Patriarch to be the intermediary between his community and the governor in all matters. Their action in so doing bears a certain analogy to the tendency to contest the capitulatory rights of foreigners, rights which in both cases are the outcome of the incompatibility of the Sheri law and Christian jurisprudence in religious and semi-religious matters.

A meeting of the national council of the Armenians, comprising, that is, the lay and clerical members, took place on the 8th with closed doors to consider their position, at which it appears that the impulsive intention of the ecclesiastical members to follow their chief's lead and resign was eventually overruled, and a commission was appointed to examine the causes which led the Patriarch to resign, and the reply of the Porte to his resignation, in order to ascertain whether some compromise may be arrived at which will dissipate the difficulties which have arisen. Should no compromise be found, the present intention of the Armenians is that the lay council should resign, the bishops and priests following their example, with the result that the churches would be closed and all baptismal and burial rites be suspended. The interests and privileges of the Œcumenical Patriarch are also involved in the general question, and if the Greeks should now make common cause with the Armenians, and similarly, so to speak, lay themselves under interdict, a situation of no small delicacy and tension would arise.

The policy of antagonising the spiritual heads of two important and powerful Christian communities seems to be one of doubtful wisdom.

I have, &c.

GERARD LOWTHER.

[36613] No. 35.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Lowther.

(No. 324.)

Sir, *Foreign Office, October 18, 1909.*

I HAVE received your Excellency's despatch No. 790 of the 20th ultimo, respecting the question of claims for compensation in connection with the disturbances at Adana.

I should be glad to know whether the result of the court-martial shows conclusively, in your Excellency's opinion, that the local authorities failed to do their duty, as contended by the German Ambassador in his note to the Sublime Porte, and, further, what is the nature of the conclusive evidence as to the conduct of the soldiery to which his Excellency adverts.

It would seem that, unless misconduct of a clear kind, and in the actual performance (or misperformance) of their duty, can be established against the authorities, the claims of foreign subjects cannot be pressed, and that even then they can only be pressed if they arise as a direct consequence of such misconduct or negligence.

I should, however, be glad to be kept informed of the result of Baron von Marschall's action, since, if German subjects are compensated, His Majesty's Government will be absolutely entitled to press for compensation for any British subjects who may be *in consimili casû*.

I am, &c.

E. GREY.

[38902] No. 36.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 21.)

(No. 343.)

(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, October 21, 1909.*

LYNCH concession. See your telegram No. 680 of yesterday.

The Minister of Public Works discussed yesterday with Colonel Picot the convention, "cahier des charges," &c., and raised certain points which he claimed to be unessential. These were points regarding customs immunities, the tariff, the service on the Karun River, and others upon which no agreement had been arrived at.

In consequence of this I pointed out to-day to the Grand Vizier and to Rifaat Pasha that it was not in accordance with their previous engagements to raise these points. I also hinted that the 4 per cent. negotiations might be jeopardised by their persistence in doing so. In reply, I received a most emphatic assurance from Hilmi Pasha that a satisfactory settlement will be concluded. His Highness even told me that sooner than not keep to his engagement he would resign, and that he had emphasised to his colleagues the fact that he was pledged to me to bring the matter to a satisfactory conclusion.

His Highness has invited Lynch's representatives to discuss the matter with him before the next meeting of the Council of Ministers.

[39219] No. 37.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 25.)

(No. 847.)

Sir, *Constantinople, October 13, 1909.*

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith a despatch from His Majesty's consul at Erzeroum, enclosing a report by Mr. Safrastian on the improvement in the position and prospects of the Armenian villages in the Moush Plain.

I have, &c.

GERARD LOWTHER.

Inclosure 1 in No. 37.

Consul Shipley to Sir G. Lowther.

(No. 28.)

Sir, *Erzeroum, October 4, 1909.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Excellency herewith the copies of an interesting report which I have received from Mr. Safrastian giving an account of the gratifying improvement which, since the re-establishment of the constitution, has taken place in the position and prospects of the Armenian villages in the plain of Moush through which he passed on his recent visit to the monastery of Surp Garabed.

In the districts to the south of Bitlis, as is shown by Mr. Safrastian's previous reports, there still remain certain refractory Kurdish chiefs to be dealt with, but in general the testimony which I am continually receiving from travellers both in the outlying districts of this vilayet and in those referred to by Mr. Safrastian fully bears out the latter's statement as to the increase in security enjoyed by the Armenians and their comparative freedom from molestation by the Kurds.

I have, &c.

H. S. SHIPLEY.

Inclosure 2 in No. 37.

Mr. Safrastian to Consul Shipley.

Bitlis, September 9, 1909.

Sir,

IN accordance with your permission to visit the monastery of Surp Karabet (Chmali), I have the honour to report upon the situation of the plain of Moush as I saw and studied it during my six days' tour (26th to the 31st August last) in that district.

Situation in General.—As I had the honour to state in my despatch of the 9th June last, the prevailing tranquillity and peace are being emphasised by every passing day of the new system of government. The false expectations of reactionary Kurds that the new régime could not endure very long seem now to have fallen to the ground by many convincing proofs of activity displayed by the Government towards the strengthening of a just administration and the lawful treatment of misdeeds.

Besides the Government's solicitude to keep order and security in the country, the passing of the law of military service of Christians in the Ottoman Parliament has had a deadening effect upon the minds of the Mussulman population, which now finds itself in the presence of the accomplished fact, the apparent burial of many Mahommedan privileges over the Christians.

Armenian-Kurdish Relations.—In consequence of the energetic steps taken in most cases by the Government and the courts to deal properly with any breach of the law committed by Moslems against each other or the Armenians, and *vice versâ*, the Kurds are quite quiet at present and friendly towards the Armenians. It is difficult, however, to say how far one can trust the present apparent friendship existing between the two races; in circumstances they are left in face of each other without any external control.

It is to be considered that, owing to the suppression of certain former conditions very favourable to the material interests of Moslems, both officials and citizens, a latent feeling of discontent and vengeance may be noticed among classes of the Moslem population. It is quite psychological that they feel grieved at the cutting dry of almost all means and sources of their previous prosperity. In my humble opinion effective efforts are to be made for the better understanding of their common interests and the mutual comprehension of each other's position.

I was informed that in March last the headmaster of the Armenian schools in Moush had issued a circular addressed to the Moslem population of the district, inviting Kurds and Circassians to send their boys to Armenian schools and let them learn at the side of their Armenian fellow-brothers. I regret, however, to say that the call was not attended to in any way. But this first failure seems to have never despaired the Armenian ecclesiastical authorities in Moush, which, I understand, will try further efforts for the success of this much-desired plan.

The local branches of the Committee of Union and Progress may carry out a most excellent and patriotic work for the promotion of cordial relations between the two races. For to all intents and purposes they are advantageously in a position to enlighten the ignorant masses of the Moslem population and to push forward the task set by the Armenian ecclesiastical authorities. It is a pity that these committees, owing to their lack of initiative, have very seldom been able to get themselves rid of the local blighting influences and the flimsy party-strife.

Fresh Economic and Intellectual start of Armenians.—Hundreds of returning Armenian fugitives from foreign countries to their villages and ruined homes with enough money to buy plough and animals; the suppression of all sorts of indirect taxes ("hafir"), and bribery levied on Armenians by several classes of Moslems; the abolition of the military exemption tax; the regular collection of other taxes and above all, their hopeful prospects as regards the enjoyment of all fruits of their toil, are enabling the Armenians to make a fresh economic start. Many of them are as yet heavily indebted to their oppressive agas, and fed themselves with greens in the last spring, as they used to do so during the previous springs. As far, however, as I can gather, this destitute class of Armenian peasantry constitutes the minority. The restitution of goods and cattle stolen by Kurds between the period of 1895–1908 from Armenians has contributed mostly to the regeneration of those Armenians who could substantiate their claims upon their Kurdish robbers.

During the ending years of despotism, every observer would notice that over this fertile and level expanse of approximately 750 square miles of the Moush Plain, scarcely one-eighth of the land was cultivated, while according to my reckoning I estimate that the half of the land was cultivated this year. Briefly, the prevailing opinion among the

Armenians themselves was that they would no doubt attain a fair degree of prosperity and well-being in a period of five years provided that the security and the peace continued to prevail.

The Armenian Bishop of Moush, who for twelve years was in exile at Jerusalem with ex-Patriarch Ismirlian, told me that he, aided by the local Taschinaksutiun Committee, had drawn up a scheme of general instruction, by which schools were to be opened this year in each of the 140 Armenian villages of Moush and Sasun, and teachers were to be provided for each of them. This step is really of vital necessity to the Armenian race, which for centuries of the direst servitude and deep ignorance has lost its character, and which through such a thorough system of national education may alone repair that very deplorable moral loss.

Occupied Armenian Land restored.—One of the evils of the old administration was to push the Armenians to the bitter ends and thus to compel them to leave their village. The villages thus deserted were filled by the Government with Kurds and Circassian immigrants from Russia. So at least in forty villages in Moush and Bulanik houses and land belonging by title-deeds to Armenians were allotted to the Moslem intruders, who for years considered them as their own property, although the land tax was invariably paid by the remaining Armenian villagers.

With the proclamation of the constitution the returning Armenians turned out several of these intruders in many cases with the help of the police, and reoccupied their stolen land and houses. With the exception of the cases of Vartenis and Dadreskom, Armenian villages in Moush, all intruding Kurds and Circassians have fled from the villages, the latter to the Caucasus, whence they had come. As to the above-mentioned cases of Vartenis and Dadreskom, the restitution of land and the expulsion of the intruders was opposed very strongly by Husni Bey, the late vali here, as he himself had distributed the land to these intruders in 1904, when he was mutessarif at Moush. Owing to the intrigues of Husni Bey the land was made to the names of the immigrants without any pay to or consent of the proprietors.

It is hoped, however, that Salih Pasha, the acting vali here, will settle matters to the satisfaction of the deprived Armenians. I understand further from trustworthy sources that the notorious brigands Husananli Hamidieh officers are being expelled from Armenian villages one by one.

The Revival of Armenian Villages.—Owing to the severest persecutions of the Hamidian régime, especially carried through most successfully in the district of Moush, and to the horrible misery following from such persecutions, most of Armenian villages in Moush were depopulated or occupied by Moslem intruders. The fugitive Armenians were somehow managing to cross the frontiers or to take refuge under the protection of powerful Kurdish agas.

Soon after, however, the re-establishment of the constitution, and thanks to the amnesty granted to all fugitives, Armenian deserters returned and are returning still to their former ruined homes. Mahommedan intruders yielded, and the former reconstructed their ruins. After thirteen months of constitutional Government, the result in the way of the revival of Armenian population may be considered as satisfactory. From private letters of Armenian emigrants abroad, it is understood that the horrors of the Adana massacres have done much to thwart the growing course of repatriation.

The following list shows the comparative state of the Armenian population in Moush between the years 1907 and 1909, the former figures are extracted from Mr. Heard's despatch of the 25th August, 1907; as to the latter ones, I have collected myself during my recent trip to Moush. In submitting the following list to your attention, I humbly request to bear in mind that I have picked up only those villages which may be considered as typical and suitable to give an idea as to the growth of other villages:—

Villages.	Houses, 1907.	Houses, 1909.
Ziaret	70	180
Arkavank	20	45
Dermerd	25	40
Arnist	26	55
Moghunk	32	50
Koms	26	70
Khojer	22	45
Oghunk	60	85

State of Armenians in Sasun.—In the monastery of Surp Karabet, I met some of the Armenian notables of Sasun, who had given us very valuable information during the bloody events of that district in 1904. In reply to my inquiries as to their present conditions, they stated that they were not quite well, and had been unable so far to recover from the shattering shocks of 1904, owing to the excessively repressive measures taken against them by the despotic Government.

Until July of 1908, Turkish soldiers in the barracks at Talori prevented the gathering of the people of that village; but since then the soldiers have been withdrawn, and very few of them remain there at present.

The state of the district of Pesank (or Pesantz Kavar) in Southern Sasun, is rather troubled in consequence of the misbehaviour of Vaporé Guendjo, a Kurdish brigand who was arbitrarily released from the prison by the late vali, Husni Bey (see my despatch of the 20th July last). This ill-reputed brigand murdered at the beginning of August last the Armenian Raisho, the headman of the Armenian village Norkegh, in Pesank, for having refused to pay him a certain amount of bribe. The threatened Armenians of Norkegh fled from the village leaving their harvest at the mercy of robbers.

They petitioned the mutessarif of Guenj without much result. Upon this the Armenian Bishop of Moush protested to Salim Pasha by an official communication. The vali sent at once a detachment of soldiers to capture Vaporé Guendjo alive or dead. His Beatitude told me that the detachment sent by the vali from Bitlis had camped at a little distance from the village of Guendjo, and would not move forward any further, as Guendjo was providing to them plenty of butter, eggs, and other commodities. The villagers are wandering yet here and there, and Vaporé Guendjo is not as yet captured.

On my return here I saw the vali and mentioned the case to him. His Excellency said that he would send fresh orders for the capture of Guendjo. On the other hand, however, he seemed to be distinctly under the impression that his orders should not be obeyed to.

Concluding this report upon the conditions of the plain of Moush, it is with the greatest satisfaction that I humbly venture to bring to your attention the enumerated improvements in this district which was, in the largest sense of the word, an earthly hell two years ago.

Majid Bey, the mutessarif of Moush, is a liberal governor, a man who does not know of any distinction among races and religions. I was assured in Moush that all Christians and many Moslems cherished a feeling of gratitude towards this constitutional mutessarif, who since his appointment in April last had done much for appeasing Moslem fanatical passions. One may hope that under the rule of such a judicious governor as Majid Bey, the sanjak of Moush will enter upon a period of development and prosperity.

I have, &c.
A. S. SAFRASTIAN.

[39221] No. 38.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 25.)

(No. 849.)
Sir,

Therapia, October 15, 1909.

SIR WILLIAM WILLCOCKS, who has been employed by the Ottoman Government during the past year in surveying in Mesopotamia, returned here a few days ago to report to the Government the result of his work.

On the irrigation works he has already reported in detail, and His Majesty's Government are in possession of these reports.

At the request of the Minister of Finance Sir William has now furnished a general report, of which I am now enabled to send you a copy.

You will observe that Sir William lays special stress in the interests of this country on the building of a railroad to connect the Tigris and Euphrates delta with the Mediterranean in preference to the construction of a line to unite Bagdad and Bussorah.

This enterprise Sir William regards as likely to be profitable, but he tells me that he has not been encouraged to think that British capitalists will favour this scheme.

The remainder of the report deals with the irrigation works, which should be

undertaken immediately, and the work designed and estimated during the last year, and which is about to be undertaken.

I have, &c.
GERARD LOWTHER.

Inclosure in No. 38.

Sir W. Willcocks to Ottoman Minister of Public Works.

Excellency, *Constantinople, October 10, 1909.*

AS directed by you, I have the honour to forward the following memorandum on the development of Mesopotamia. The subjects treated are the following:—

1. The question of railways to connect the Tigris–Euphrates delta with the Mediterranean Sea and the Persian Gulf.
2. The irrigation works which should be immediately undertaken.
3. A résumé of the works designed and estimated in 1908–9.
4. An approximate estimate of the work in hand and what will be designed and estimated in 1909–10.

1. *The Question of Railways.*

The Tigris is open to navigation for steamers between Bagdad and Bussorah throughout the year, but as water will be gradually withdrawn from the river for irrigation, this navigation will gradually deteriorate. The need for railways along this line is not immediate, however, and its consideration may be postponed.

Every merchant I have conversed with in Irak is convinced of one thing, and that is that communication between Bagdad and the Persian Gulf is not the communication which the country needs. The hopeless condition of affairs in the delta is in large measure due to the fact that the principal productions of Irak have their markets in the Eastern Mediterranean and in Europe, and it is from these same countries that Irak requires its imports; while in this direction there is no outlet. I am in entire accord with this opinion. The principal productions of the country—sheep, cattle, buffaloes, wool, liquorice, wheat, barley, and rice—all want to go westwards; and it is to the lack of means to export these cheaply and to import cheaply the productions of Europe that the present deadlock is due. Immense areas which could be cultivated are not cultivated because the price of transport is prohibitive. It is not, however, only the trade of Irak which would feed this railway, the trade of Persia would follow the same line via Kermanshah and Khanikin, and in addition we should have the transport of passengers, and especially of Moslem pilgrims from Central Asia and Persia to the holy cities of Islam. This latter traffic would assume such proportions that the Hedjaz Railway would become remunerative and relieve the Treasury and country of a heavy burden. The railway to Haifa would also benefit. Irak itself would at last be open to European and American travellers, who would come in thousands to see Baalbek, Palmyra, the site of the Garden of Eden, and the ruins of ancient Chaldea and Babylonia. These same travellers would see the possibilities of the country and capital would follow them.

The accompanying map shows clearly the proposed lines of railway.

Hit is the termination of free navigation on the Tigris, for above it are cataracts. The railway should start from Bagdad, cross the Euphrates at Feluja, and keep in its valley to Hit, a distance of 170 kilom.; at Hit the railway would leave the Euphrates Valley and cross the level desert by a straight line to El Kaim, near Abu Kimal, where the cataracts end. From El Kaim upwards the Euphrates has no cataracts, while the valley from Der Zor to El Kaim past Mayadin (the ancient Rehaboth) and Abu Kimal is capable of great development. So also is the Khabour River, which flows into the Euphrates near Mayadin and is itself free of cataracts. All the productions of this region capable of great development would reach El Kaim by boat and be from there taken on to the railway. From El Kaim the railway would go to Tidmor (Palmyra) along the old trade route across the level desert provided with wells. At Palmyra are springs. From Palmyra the railway would go to Homs on the Damascus–Aleppo Railway. The railway from Homs to Tripoli on the Mediterranean has been approved of by Government, and will soon be executed by the company owning the Damascus–Aleppo Railway, and may be considered as completed as far as this railway is concerned.

When trade is developed, a branch could be run to Damascus from Palmyra, putting Beirout and Haifa in direct communication with Bagdad. The length of the railway from Palmyra to Damascus would be 200 kilom.

The distances work out as follows :—

	Kilom.
Tripoli to Homs	110
From Homs to Palmyra	140
„ Palmyra to El Kaim	300
„ El Kaim to Hit	240
„ Hit to Bagdad	170
Of new railways to make	820

From Bagdad to the sea by railway will be 930 kilom., of which 820 kilom. remain to be conceded. The distance from Hit to the sea will be 760 kilom. or 425 miles when the railways are completed.

The Hedjaz Railway and the railways from Beirout to Damascus and Haifa to Damascus have a gauge of 1·05 metres (3 ft. 6 in.), while the Rayak-Aleppo line and the line from Tripoli to Homs have a gauge of 1·44 metres (4 ft. 8½ in.). All the South African railways, the East African Railway, and the Soudan railways have a gauge of 1·05 metres (3 ft. 6 in.), which is considered an excellent gauge by many experts for lines crossing long stretches of barren country and connecting important trade centres to each other.

I estimate the cost of a railway from Homs to Bagdad, including ample waterway for streams and economy in every other direction, at £ T. 2,750 per kilometre (4,000*l.* per mile). I recommend American practice in these pioneer railways and not European practice. The total cost from Homs to Bagdad works out to 820 kilom. at £ T. 2,750 or £ T. 2,255,000.

Traders at Bagdad estimate that such a railway would transport in its first year from Bagdad alone to Damascus—

		Tons.			
First-class passengers ..	..	1,000	Grain ..	..	5,000
Second-class passengers	..	2,000	Galls ..	..	600
Third-class passengers ..	..	5,000	Wool ..	..	4,650
Horses, cattle, and buffaloes	..	27,000	Gum ..	..	500
Sheep, calves, and goats	..	160,000	Dates ..	..	2,500
The mails	..	..	Exported	..	1,200

The traders estimate that this trade would bring in £ T. 110,000. In addition to this there would be the passenger and pilgrim traffic back to Bagdad, the imports into the country from Europe, including coal, and the local trade between the different stations, and the imports and exports at El Kaim station. Hit would supply bitumen and stone to the Tigris, and Bagdad would supply Mosul timbers to the Euphrates.

Taking everything into consideration we may count on a total gross revenue of twice £ T. 110,000, or £ T. 220,000. With such earnings the working expenses would be 50 per cent., or £ T. 110,000, leaving £ T. 110,000 as the net profit before the great irrigation works began to have their effect.

The moment the railway was open the whole country along the Euphrates up-stream of the Hindia would find itself gifted with cheap transport, and for one acre cultivated to-day a dozen would be cultivated to-morrow. Buffalo-rearing in the marshes would assume great proportions. Whatever system of irrigation may be adopted, it must never be forgotten that Mesopotamia will always be a great centre of live-stock production, and the whole of this stock will have its outlet on the Mediterranean. Once irrigation is introduced, live-stock will increase faster in numbers than the cereal crops and cotton will in area. The soil and water with their 15 per cent. lime are favourable to the rearing of animals, and so are the great steppes which surround the country, and which may one day be covered with herds of ostriches, as in South Africa.

2. *The Irrigation Works to be immediately executed.*

Certain of the irrigation works should be undertaken immediately, to ward off disasters and ensure the country against inundations, which, if allowed to continue, would doom every irrigation scheme in the delta to failure.

The works which fall within this category are three in number, viz., the Hindia

barrage works, the Habbania-Sakhlawia works, and the Tigris navigation works near Amara.

I have written of these works so fully in my reports Nos. 1, 2, and 6, that I need not recapitulate here.

1. *The Hindia Barrages on the Euphrates.*—The total estimate amounts to £ T. 352,440. These works should be undertaken and carried on with all the vigour the State is capable of. To allow the Babylon branch of the Euphrates to completely disappear would be a national disgrace which would hurt the Government throughout the whole Arab world. The loss of revenue on this branch has been £ T. 50,000 per annum since the river began to change its channel.

2. *The Habbania-Sakhlawia Works on the Euphrates.*—The total estimate amounts to £ T. 345,840. The day these works are carried out the whole delta of the Euphrates will be free from the danger of inundations, and I speak with some knowledge when I say that the revenue of the delta will be doubled without the execution of any other works. Every high flood on the Euphrates, since the closing of the Sakhlawia branch by Midhat Pasha, has worked a havoc which has discouraged agriculture along 300 kilom. of the river; and these high floods come on an average once in three years. They frighten people into sowing a smaller area than they would otherwise sow, and when they come they completely destroy what is sown. If the Sakhlawia branch were left open the crops would not be destroyed, but half of Bagdad would be under water. The only solution for the difficulty is the one I propose. If Noah had been an engineer he would have carried out the Habbania project instead of building an ark; and he would not only have saved his family, but his country as well.

3. *The Tigris Navigation Works near Amara.*—These works are estimated to cost £ T. 70,100, and are recognised as urgent by everybody. The day the Tigris ceases to be navigable Bagdad will be cut off from the world, for the Euphrates has already left its channel of centuries, and is not navigable to-day except for small boats.

The estimated cost of the two works on the Euphrates is £ T. 698,280, and of the works on the Tigris £ T. 70,100, or £ T. 768,380 in all.

No time should be lost in the construction of these works, as the position is daily aggravated. I propose to the Government to carry out these works by Government agency until contracts have been written with solid contractors of good repute; and when the contracts are written the contractors will take over what we have done at the cost we have incurred. We know our business and will waste no money. We shall insist on contractors whose names command respect in the financial world, for the great financiers look as much to the reputation of the contractors who are going to carry out the works as they do to the remunerative nature of the works themselves.

I request immediate sanction to my proposal and a grant of £ T. 25,050 for this financial year, £ T. 150,000 for the following year, and £ T. 600,000 during the two following years, or £ T. 768,380 in all.

These are the preliminary works on which will be based the regeneration of the country.

3. *Works designed and estimated in* 1908–9.

The works surveyed, designed, and estimated during the year 1908–9 are the following :—

On the Euphrates—	£ T.
1. The Hindia barrages	352,440
2. The Habbania-Sakhlawia works	345,840
3. The Feluja barrage	268,600
5. Half the Bagdad navigable canal	72,180
Total	1,034,060

On the Tigris—	£ T.
4. The Kout barrage	672,000
5. Half the Bagdad navigable canal	72,180
6. Tigris navigation works	70,100
7. Busorah reclamation works	217,300
8. Beled barrage	78,000
Total	1,110,480

The total cost, £ T. 2,144,540.

4. Programme for 1909–10.

The works in hand are the following, and their cost, roughly estimated, is as below :—

	£ T.
On the Euphrates—	
1. Hindia barrage canal system	153,000
2. Hubbania system	20,000
3. Feluja canal system	129,700
9. Akkar Kuf canal system	100,000
10. Shamia barrage	120,000
Total	822,700
On the Tigris—	£ T.
4. Koot barrage canal system	180,000
7. Bussorah reclamation works	450,000
11. Bagdad protective works	80,000
Total	710,000

The grand total works out to £ T. 1,532,700

Works estimated in 1908–9 *and the Programme for* 1909–10 *continued.*

The works on the Euphrates will therefore amount to £ T. 1,856,760, and on the Tigris to £ T. 1,820,480, or £ T. 3,677,240 in all. The area irrigated on the Euphrates will amount to 700,000 hectares, and on the Tigris to 300,000 hectares, of which a large part will be date groves and gardens. The taxes may be estimated at £ T. 750,000 per annum.

I have, &c.
W. WILLCOCKS.

[39223] No. 39.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 25.)

(No. 851.)

Therapia, October 15, 1909.

Sir,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 783 of the 25th ultimo, I have the honour to report that I have been able to gather the following further information from a Turkish official source concerning the Glasgow, Chester, and Schaeffer railway proposals in Asia Minor :—

1. Glasgow scheme : The *tracé* for this railway is, as already reported, from Sivas through Harput, Arghana, Diarbekir, Youmourtalik, Marash, Albistan, Malatia, Eghin, and Erzeroum, also from Diarbekir on to Mosul, and to a point on the Persian frontier to be determined. The railway is to be narrow gauge (1·5 metres), and no guarantees are asked, but the Government must give to the company the exclusive right to work all mines found within a radius of 20 kilom. The syndicate is to be exempted for fifteen years from the payment of royalties on all minerals exported from the mines, and royalties should only be demanded after that period if the gross traffic receipts of the railways built attain the sum of 12,000 fr. per kilometre. The concession is to be for a period of ninety-nine years.

An option of sixteen months is demanded for making the necessary surveys, and should Mr. Glasgow's syndicate decline to take up the concession after this period, all plans and drawings are to be handed over to the Government free of charge.

2. Chester's proposals are exactly similar to Glasgow's, except that the gauge is to be a normal one, i.e., 1·44 metres, and that he also proposes to build a line from Suedia to Aleppo touching Antioch, with a branch, if necessary, to Alexandretta, with extension on from Aleppo to Deir Zor.

3. Schaeffer's schemes are also identical with Glasgow's, except that should his syndicate decline to take up the concession at the expiry of the option, the Government is to have all drawings and plans on payment of half the cost of the surveys made.

From the information which the Turkish Government have obtained from Washington and Brussels as to the standing of the syndicates said to be supporting Glasgow, Chester, and Schaeffer, it appears that the supporters of Glasgow have a capital of about 7,000,000 dollars. Chester is backed by a person named Moore, as also

by the Carnegie trust, who between them cannot, it is said, muster more than 3,000,000 to 4,000,000 dollars. The railway and mining schemes put forward by both these men will entail the expenditure of something like 16,000,000*l.* to 18,000,000*l.*, and in view of the information obtained regarding the financial standing of Glasgow's and Chester's backers, the Government were not inclined to listen to either of the proposals put forward by them, so that they may be considered as "déchus."

The news regarding the financial standing of Schaeffer was quite favourable, and it has been ascertained that his syndicate can carry out all the schemes put forward by him. My informant, however, doubted whether the Government would entertain Schaeffer's scheme as it stood at present, as he considered that there were other parts of the country which needed railway communication far more than those mentioned in Schaeffer's project. It seems probable, however, that he will get some of his proposals through.

The local press announces that the Tripoli branch line has been given to Vitalis. This announcement is premature ; but I gather that there is every probability of the negotiations terminating soon.

I have, &c.
GERARD LOWTHER.

[39224] No. 40.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 25.)

No. 852.)

Sir, *Constantinople, October* 15, 1909.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 834 of the 9th instant, I have the honour to forward herewith a despatch from the acting British consul at Jeddah, reporting on the progress of the Arab revolt in the Yemen.

I have, &c.
GERARD LOWTHER.

Inclosure in No. 40.

Acting Consul Richardson to Sir G. Lowther.

(No. 52.)

Sir, *Jeddah, October* 1, 1909.

IN continuation of my despatch No. 48 of the 13th ultimo, I have the honour to furnish the following details of the progress of the Arab revolt under Seyyid Mahommed-el-Idrisee in the tehama of El Yemen, north of Hodeidah, that have just reached me.

The situation on the 25th September was as follows : Lieutenant-Colonel Shoukri Bey who, with two Yemen battalions, had retaken Zaidyia on the 26th August, was at Zohra, north of Lohein and not far from Bajl, where he had been invested by the rebels ever since.

Most of the tribesmen that joined the Idrisee banner at the beginning of the revolt have now got tired, and are returning to their homes. They appear to have been deceived by the seyyid on the one hand, and have got frightened on the other at the active military preparations being made by the Turks to punish them.

Besides vague accounts of fighting in the districts of El-Hajjieh and El-Hajjur, and the investment of the Turkish force at Zohra, the rebels in the tehama and along the littoral are showing no signs of any great activity on their part of late, nor have encounters between Turkish troops and themselves been reported.

The sheikh of Midi and the chiefs of the minor clans of the powerful Beni Merwan tribe that inhabit the hinterland of Midi have refused to make common cause with Seyyid Mahomed against the Turks, but have requested the Hodeidah authorities to dispatch troops to their assistance in opposing the Mahdi in their territory.

The seaport of Lohein is being made the base of operations, where a large force with a number of guns and a quantity of ammunition and supplies and the necessary transport animals is being sent.

Ferik Rifaat Pasha, commanding the 43th Division of the VIIth Army Corps at Sana'a, has been entrusted with the operations to be taken against the rebels, and left for Lohein in the transport "Bizmi 'Alim" on the 23rd September.

The transport "Shura" that arrived at Hodeidah from Constantinople on the

20th September with 1,400 regulars (under arms) and seventy mules embarked 150 men of the 4th battalion of the 52nd Regiment from Jebel Reima the same day and sailed for Loheia on the 21st.

She was followed by the transport "Bizma 'Alim," also from Constantinople, with 1,400 regulars and 150 mules and horses, that embarked Rifaat Pasha at Hodeidah and sailed for Loheia on the 23rd.

A number of donkeys have also been shipped to Loheia to serve as transport.

It will thus be seen that Rifaat Pasha has over 3,000 trained men under his command at Loheia, where he is mobilising and preparing to advance against the insurgents.

It is expected that a whole division of infantry, comprising six battalions to be drawn from Salonica, three from Adrianople, three from Anatolia, and four from the IVth Army Corps will arrive at Hodeidah shortly to deal with the revolt in Yemen under the Idrisee.

Arabs in the vicinity of Loheia are now awed at the Turkish military preparations, and are coming into Loheia with their camels, which they are offering to hire to the military authorities.

The whereabouts of Seyyid Mahomed Idrisee are not known. It is stated that he has gone to Sada to try and effect a reconciliation between the two rival imams, viz., between Seyyid Yahya Hamididdeen of Shahara and the Dhaiyani, Seyyid Hussain-el-Kasimi. The Hodeidah authorities have ascertained that he (Seyyid Mahomed) has quitted his head-quarters at Sabyeah.

The Ottoman cruiser "Mejidieh" and the gun-boats "Buland Deriya" and "Marmaris" have recently arrived in Yemen waters from the Mediterranean, and in conjunction with the "Naushahr" and "Custammni," stationed in the Red Sea, will operate against the rebels by sea, and are at present blockading the eastern littoral between Cunfida and Hodeidah.

The dispositions of these war-ships, as far as I can ascertain, are as follows: The cruiser "Mejidieh" is at Hodeidah; the "Buland Deriya" at Cunfuda; the "Cushmuni" at Salif; and the "Camaran" and the "Naushahr" at Loheia. The latter will cruise between Loheia and Geezan, and the "Marmaris" will relieve her at Loheia.

The movements of the Ottoman troops and vessels, giving precise details, &c., will be furnished in a separate despatch as soon as the usual reports are received from the Hodeidah vice-consulate.

The Italian cruiser "Volturno," that has been lying at Hodeidah since the commencement of the trouble in the Yemen, sailed on the 21st September for the Benadir coast, when she was replaced by another Italian ship of war (name of vessel not as yet reported to me).

It is difficult to obtain information here about the situation in the province of Assyr.

The Ottoman ship "Bahr-el-Jadid," that recently transported about 800 men from Akaba and Yembo to Cunfuda, returned here on the 27th September from the latter place.

She reported that affairs were quiet all along the coast between this and Cunfuda and confirmed the capture by the rebels early in September of Makhail, that is situated between Cunfuda and the capital of the province (Abha).

The garrison consisted of two companies of infantry, who on surrendering were permitted to leave for the coast. Two hundred cases of Maxim ammunition, 200 cases of Mauser and 500 cases of Martini ammunition, 1,400 bags of flour and rice, and some treasure fell to the booty of the captors.

Abha, the capital, where there is a big garrison, at least seven battalions with several guns, is thus cut off from communication with the coast.

Suleman Pasha, the newly-appointed governor and military commander of the Assyr sanjak, who was said to have been killed, is now reported to be safe and has with him Kazim Pasha, the ex-mutessarif, a certain Nazim Pasha, the caimakam of Cunfuda, and other officials.

I have, &c.
G. A. RICHARDSON.

[39227]

No. 41.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(*Received October 25.*)

(No. 855.)

Sir,

Constantinople, October 18, 1909.

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith, for the information of the War Office, a despatch from the military attaché to this embassy, reporting an improvement in the situation in the Yemen.

I have, &c.
GERARD LOWTHER.

Inclosure in No. 41.

Colonel Surtees to Sir G. Lowther.

(No. 126.)

Sir,

Constantinople, October 18, 1909.

I HAVE the honour to inform you that the latest trustworthy reports received from the Yemen represent the situation there as greatly improved.

The prompt dispatch of adequate reinforcements for the Turkish forces seems to have produced the required effect, and the following of El Idrisee appears to be melting away.

Ferik Rifaat Pasha, general officer commanding the XIIIth Division, is in charge of the operations about Loheia. He has some 3,000 good troops under his command. He is stated to be collecting donkey and camel transport, and the Arabs are freely offering the latter on hire.

A success is confirmed to have been obtained by the rebels early in September, to whom two companies of infantry capitulated at Makhail, near Cunfida, with stores and ammunition. The result of this was to cut off from the coast the town of Abha with its garrison of seven battalions and artillery.

The gunboat "Marmaris" and the cruiser "Medjidie" reached Hodeida on the 15th and 21st September respectively.

I have, &c.
H. CONYERS SURTEES,
Colonel, General Staff, Military Attaché.

[39230]

No. 42.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(*Received October 25.*)

(No. 858.)

Sir,

Constantinople, October 19, 1909.

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith a despatch from the acting vice-consul at Van, making his quarterly report on the affairs of that vilayet.

I have, &c.
GERARD LOWTHER.

Inclosure in No. 42.

Acting Vice-Consul Morgan to Sir G. Lowther.

(No. 14.)

Sir,

Van, October 2, 1909.

I HAVE the honour to submit to your Excellency a quarterly report on the affairs of this vilayet.

The Population and the Constitution.—Since the arrival of the present vali people have begun to believe more in the reality of the constitution. The proclamation of the constitution did not appear to effect any great change in the state of affairs at Van. The Government officials, no matter what their pasts, retained their posts. Known reactionaries were seen to be appointed presidents of municipalities, or of commissions of enquiry instituted to search out reactionaries. They even took a leading part in the council of the local Committee of Union and Progress. Those who for years had committed abuses or persecuted Armenians were not sought out and punished. People—or, at least, the Christian element—were thus inclined to look askance at the constitu-

tion as being but another fair-promising scheme that, like many Turkish schemes under the old régime, could never be put into practice. This impatience for results on the part of the Christians was ill-advised and could do no good. I have frequently pointed out to the Armenian chiefs the dangers of such impatience. I recalled to them that active persecution had ceased. The Kurds can no longer harry Armenians with impunity. The constitution cannot be expected to effect in a few months great changes in a remote vilayet like Van. There has nevertheless been one great result—open and unpunished injustice towards Christians has ceased. The new vali is going about his work well. His subordinate officials may be those of the old régime and reactionaries at heart, but under a capable and well-meaning head, such as they have at present, there is hope that their activities will be directed into better channels and their reactionary ideas suppressed. The danger of their joining the forces of reaction the moment they could do so with impunity always exists, and they might, if they thought they could do so without being detected, act unconstitutionally; but even that danger will pass in a few years' time, when the Central Government is strong enough to act forcibly in the outlying provinces.

A part of the Moslem population is somewhat discontented with the present vali, whom they accuse of doing much for the Armenians and nothing for them, so that the constitution to them seems to be only a scheme devised for the benefit of Armenians. None of them, I think, regret Abdul Hamid's fall, although some of them may sigh for the "good old times," i.e., conditions as under Abdul Hamid but without Abdul Hamid.

The Kurds remained relatively quiet, although the establishment of the constitution can have brought them no profit.

On the whole, I think that constitutional ideas will be propagated very slowly among the inhabitants of the vilayet of Van, and that the vali's task, opposed as he is, not only by the mass of the people but also by his own officials, is a difficult one. Certainly, the time is not ripe for the abolition of the Capitulations in Van, nor, according to present indications, will it be ripe for another twenty years.

The re-establishment of Armenians on lands of which they have been dispossessed.—The vali took up this question on his arrival, and has succeeded in re-establishing Armenians on their ancient lands in the village of Mendan (near Archag), and also in the vicinity of Bash-Kuleh, and is at present investigating the same question at Arjish. In Mendan a Turkish chief, named Said Bey, had dispossessed the Armenian owners and taken possession of their property. The Mudir of Archag was ordered by the vali to dislodge the Kurds. He reported that this had been done. The report was found to be false. Thereupon the vali dismissed the mudir and ordered Said Bey to be imprisoned. Said Bey was captured and imprisoned in Van, but succeeded two days ago in making his escape and has not yet been recaptured, some say on account of the connivance of the gendarmes pursuing him.

The vali by his activity in this matter has naturally created a feeling of hostility against himself in certain quarters.

The Kurds.—Although the Kurds have been giving very little trouble to the Government lately, yet in cases where they have done so the vali has taken up a strong line. The cases in which the vali has taken action during the past quarter are those of Mir Mahi, a Kurdish brigand, and the seizure of thirteen oxen by the Kurds of Autzav. (These Kurds are Nihan Kurds, and live near Khoshab.)

Mir Nahin, a Kurdish chief living near Norduz, fired by news of events in Constantinople in the month of April, seized the occasion to kill eight Armenians at Gangonar. On the 28th April a company of soldiers was sent to pursue him, but they effected nothing. The vali, shortly after his arrival, ordered a certain Ahmed Bey, major of gendarmerie, to arrest Mir Mahi at all hazards and not to return to Van before doing so. Ahmed Bey, however, returned empty-handed, saying that his force of gendarmes was inadequate. He was again dispatched on the same mission, and on the 4th September an official announcement was made to the effect that he had arrested the father and two followers of Mir Mahi. The brigand is still at large. He is accompanied by some five or six men, and two days ago attacked and robbed a party of natives near Bash-Kaleh.

In the case of the thirteen oxen, these were carried off from certain caravan proprietors near Khoshab by the Kurds of Autzav, one Kurd being killed in the affray. The vali threatened to hold the local Kurdish chiefs responsible, if the oxen were not returned within a fixed period. The chiefs at first objected that the robbers were Persian Kurds, and that the oxen had been carried off to Persia, but the vali remaining firm, the oxen were restored within the period fixed.

Hussein Pasha, Kurdish Sheikh of Patnotz, who was in prison at Van for various misdeeds committed in the past on Armenians, was acquitted by the tribunal on the 20th July, to the great dissatisfaction of the Armenians.

The Committee of Union and Progress.—Up to a few days ago the committee was composed of civilians many of them being reactionaries. On the 17th September many of the officers of the regiments stationed here, acting on instructions received from Constantinople, again joined the club and took over the direction of affairs. Steps were at once taken to bring about a reconciliation with the Tashnakists, relations between the two clubs having been previously strained. It is expected that this reconciliation will be completed when Nadi Bey, an emissary of the Central Committee of Union and Progress at Salonica, who is expected to arrive here shortly, arrives.

The Tashnakists.—These are the strongest and most numerous of the Armenian parties. The richer Armenians, however, are opposed to them because the Tashnakists have taken certain privileges, emoluments, and sinecures from them. The Armenian clergy are against them because they have taken possession of the monastery of Akhtamar and are administering its revenues for educational purposes. The Tashnakists, and more especially since their rapprochement with the Committee of Union and Progress, can afford to disregard their hostility. The vali wishes to get rid of the chiefs, partly because they are foreign subjects, and partly because their doctrines are socialistic, and he is of opinion that the doctrine of socialism is dangerous for people who are as yet unused to constitutional freedom.

The Revision of Military Ranks.—As a result of the recent law, Yaver Pasha, who was acting vali for some time before the arrival of the present vali, from being Liwa, Major-General, becomes Yaver Bey, Lieutenant-Colonel.

The "Serbesti."—Six copies of this newspaper, dated the 26th August, were sent to this vice-consulate from Paris. Copies were also sent to other residents of the town. The vali has ordered the police to proceed against persons found in possession of copies of the "Serbesti."

Military News.—Lieutenant-Colonel Fuad Bey, a most intelligent and upright officer, who has recently returned from a survey of the Persian frontier, is now acting military commandant of Van. This post was previously held by Yaver Pasha, now Yaver Bey.

Two thousand short Mauser rifles, five shot (1898 model), reached Van about a month ago, and have been distributed to the soldiers.

Although the military exoneration tax has not been collected from Christians this year, no recruiting of Christians has yet taken place, but it is said that recruiting of Christians will take place at Arjish shortly. The opinion of the local Armenians is in favour of military service, esteeming that military training will be of service if massacres are again attempted.

The 2nd battalion of the 30th Infantry Regiment arrived here to-day from Serai, and will take the place of the 3rd battalion of the same regiment, which will leave shortly for Serai.

Yesterday the 2nd battalion of the 32nd Regiment passed through Van, coming from Akhlat and going to Bayezid.

During the past quarter the "Ihtiat" of Van, to the number of 1,100, has been mobilised and sent to the Persian frontier. It is intended to bring the battalions already at the frontier up to full strength by drafting into them the requisite number of these "Ihtiat"—"Reserve."

In the beginning of July the 4th battalion of the 29th Regiment left Van for the Persian frontier.

The Vali's Journeys.—As reported in my despatch No. 12 of the 17th September, 1909, the vali made a journey during the past quarter to the Persian frontier, and shortly after his return set out again for Serai, Arjish, Adeljiwas, &c. During his absence on both occasions, he left in charge the kadi of the town. The kadi has had instructions to refer to the vali by telegram in every question that may arise, and he is unwilling to take the responsibility for even the most unimportant affairs.

Mar Shimun.—Mar Shimun came to Van on the 13th September. He wished to speak to the vali about the relations between his tribe, the Tiari, and the Kurdish tribe living south of his country, the Bewari, and the proposal that these two tribes should make peace; and also to make certain suggestions with regard to the service of Nestorians in the army.

The attack of the Bewari, under Reshid Bey, on the Tiari, in August 1908, has been described in Captain Dickson's despatch No. 23 of the 19th August, 1908. It now appears that the kaimakam of Julamerk about three months ago informed

Mar Shimun that the Government had ordered the Tiari to make peace with the Bewari, and that he should go down into Bewari country with his men to do so. Mar Shimun is willing to make peace, but on condition that recompense is made for the damage done during the last raid. He complains that during this last raid the rough and ready rules of tribal fighting were not observed, the Kurds having preached a "holy war." Even if recompense is not made, he is willing to make peace on condition that Reshid Bey be sent into exile or removed from the Bewari country. Peace on any other terms he considers dishonourable, and liable to weaken his authority over his tribe. The kaimakam having several times insisted that peace should be made, Mar Shimun promised to convoke a meeting of his tribesmen, and to act according to their decision. The meeting was convoked, the kaimakam being present, and the tribesmen, probably instructed beforehand by Mar Shimun, refused to make peace but on the terms mentioned above. The matter was thereupon reported to the Government, and up to the present no further developments have yet taken place.

As regards the recruiting of Nestorians, Mar Shimun wishes Nestorians to be kept together, and not to be drafted in batches into different Moslem companies, and asks for facilities for them for the observance of their religion.

The vali seems to have given Mar Shimun fair words but no definite promises.

The Persian Frontier.—As mentioned above, the vali journeyed to the frontier during the past quarter. In the section of this despatch headed "Military News" will be found details of the troops sent to the frontier during the same quarter. On Tuesday last, 22nd September, Lieutenant-Colonel Fuad Bey and Bedros Effendi arrived here from Urumiah. Fuad Bey left Van in the beginning of July to make an inspection of the troops on the Persian frontier. He visited Serai, Khoi, Kotur, Selmass, Urumiah, Oshnu, Mergavvar, Tergavvar, and Suj Bulak. He fixed his head-quarters at Urumiah and stayed there some time. He occupied himself principally with surveying and making maps of the whole of the frontier. He accompanied the vali on part of his journey.

Bedros Effendi was Turkish consular agent in Urumiah up to quite recently. A Turkish consul-general having now been appointed there, Bedros has come to Van to see if the vali can find him another post.

I have, &c.

JAMES MORGAN.

[39232] No. 43.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 25.)

(No. 810.)

Sir, *Therapia, October 19, 1909.*

THE general question of the patriarchal privileges in the Ottoman Empire which has been brought to the fore by the Armenian patriarch's action in connection with the sentences of the Adana court-martial as reported in my despatch No. 653 of the 11th August has aroused a good deal of interest and controversy in the local press here; and public opinion has been curious to learn in how far the œcumenical patriarch would support his colleague and allow himself to be drawn into the dispute.

As regards his attitude on the general principles involved, this curiosity has now been satisfied by the publication a few days ago of an interview which a representative of the "Turquie" newspaper obtained, and in which the patriarch expresses his views with great clearness.

In the first place, he accuses the Government of aiming at the suppression of the patriarchal privileges enjoyed by the Christian nationalities in the Empire; and he believes that the Young Turkish party, imbued with the ideals prevailing in modern France, are endeavouring to bring about the separation of Church and State, to limit the powers of the patriarchs to questions connected with religion, and by making the deputies in the Chamber the mouth-pieces of complaints of a personal or political character, to detach the Christian populations from their natural centre at the patriarchate and so weaken them.

Apart from the question of its legitimacy, the patriarch maintains that such a policy is entirely at variance with the principles of universal justice and equality and constitutionalism so much vaunted by the Young Turks. In France the Government

began measures by attacking the State religion, converting the Catholic Church into a religious State debarred from all interference in political matter. So in Turkey the Government should begin with the Moslem faith, which is the State religion, should refuse the Sheikh-ul-Islam any political attributes and debar him from sitting in the Council of Ministers. Nor would it be right that the Sultan, who is head of the State, should also embody the person of the khalif; it would be a crying inequality in a modern country that the Turkish elements of the population should have religious chiefs who enjoyed political privileges, whereas the Christian priests had none. The patriarch was convinced that the Government had no intention of separating the Moslem Church and State, and so long as that remains united it is his intention to fight for his privileges as long as he can.

On two other points he expressed himself no less distinctly with regard to the military service of non-Moslems, he said that the Phanar had demanded that Christians shall be enrolled in separate companies, having Government paid priests attached and having absolute liberty to exercise their religious observances as it suited them. On the subject of education he declared that he would never admit Government inspection of Greek schools, for which he himself alone was responsible to the Government.

On the question of the patriarchal privileges, the patriarch's claims have been upheld in rather an unexpected quarter, by no less a person than the ex-Minister of Public Works and Commerce. In a recently published interview Gabriel Noradounghian points out that these political privileges actually exist, and in fact are internationally guaranteed. When after the Crimean war the Powers made it a condition of Turkey's being admitted into the European concert at the Congress of Paris, Sultan Medjid issued a "firman of reforms" which was submitted to and passed by the Congress giving all non-Moslem communities the right to provide for the management of their own internal affairs by drawing up a special internal règlement to be submitted to the Sublime Porte for approval. The constitution now in force was the corollary to this measure, and the chapter in it entitled "Devoirs et Droits" specifies all the political attributes enjoyed by the patriarchate. Gabriel Effendi even goes so far as to claim that the political privileges laid down in the firman having been again passed by the Congress of Berlin without objection they have gained international force and it will require international sanction to alter or abolish them.

In reply to the claims put forward on behalf of the maintenance intact of the patriarchal privileges, the "Tanin" (the Young Turks' organ) on Saturday published a long article, in which, while more or less admitting the substance of the facts brought forward by the patriarch, it declares that he has entirely misinterpreted the Governments real aims. While thanking him for his clear outspoken statements, it observes that his words are calculated to give a false impression that the new régime desire to oppress the non-Moslems under cover of constitutionalism and new laws, and make them forget their language and nationality. With regard to the patriarchal privileges, the article admits that non-Moslems must appeal to the patriarch in religious matters only, just as the Moslems must refer to the mufti in questions of marriage, divorce, &c., and to the Government in personal and political questions, so that similar treatment is meted out to all alike. If the patriarch is to have the right of complaining of the unfair treatment of Christians by Moslem officials, it would be only just that the Sheikh-ul-Islam should have an equal right to complain when Moslem subjects are ill-treated by Christian officials, of whom, under the present régime, there are a considerable number in the Empire.

But the writer declares that the patriarch's claims are not really in the interests of his community, whose causes he pretends to espouse merely as a cloak to maintain his own personal interest, which have grown up imperceptibly, and which must necessarily suffer when, for instance, the question of education is removed from his control, so that the Greek children, brought up on liberal and modern lines, will incline to place the interests of their country before those of the patriarchate; all enlightened Greeks even must see through this attitude, and the Government could afford to await the issue of their own policy with equanimity.

As to the other two points raised, the article points out that the demand for special companies of Christians in the army is illogical, and would make no difference to their worship, seeing that individual liberty of worship is granted to all alike; and as to the education question, the writer declares the Government will defend their legal right of inspection against the patriarch's resistance and any other such claims. If the Greek schools should resist the law, the Government would have the sympathy of the whole world in suppressing them for attempting to resist one of the obvious and elementary rights of any civilised administration. Why should the patriarch object to inspection

if the teaching in the Greek schools is patriotic, and in no way directed against Ottomanism.

The only object of the inspection of schools by the Government is to ensure that no such harmful instruction is being given.

I have, &c.
GERARD LOWTHER.

[39645] No. 44.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(*Received October* 28.)

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of Viscount Morley, forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of enclosures in a letter from the Foreign Secretary to the Government of India, dated the 23rd September, relative to the proposed American missionary dispensary at Mutra.

India Office, October 27, 1909.

Inclosure 1 in No. 44.

Major Trevor to Government of India.

Bushire, September 8, 1909.

(Telegraphic.) P.

PLEASE refer to my telegram, dated the 14th August, 1909. The following telegram from the political agent, Muscat, is repeated:—

"Please see my telegram, dated the 14th August. Colonel Jaykar['s] son tells me Thom is trying to buy three houses at Mutra belonging to Colonel Jaykar, presumably for a dispensary. The latter, who lives at Bombay, would doubtless, pending the decision of American missionaries question, agree to postpone the sale. Agha Khan, I believe, wants to buy the main house, without which the others are useless."

As suggested, it would seem advisable to try to get the sale postponed.

Inclosure 2 in No. 44.

Government of India to Government of Bombay.

Simla, September 15, 1909.

(Telegraphic.) P.

AGAINST wishes of Sultan, who has appealed to us, American missionaries at Muscat are trying to open a dispensary at Mutra. We have referred the question to Secretary of State, with a recommendation that the Sultan should be supported. It is now reported in a telegram from political agent at Muscat that Dr. Thom, of the American mission, is trying to buy three houses, belonging to Colonel Jaykar, who is now in Bombay, for the dispensary. It is believed Agha Khan wishes to buy main house, without which the others are useless. Pending settlement of question, please induce Jaykar to postpone sale if there is no objection.

[38405] No. 45.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir E. Goschen.

(No. 266. Secret.)

Foreign Office, October 28, 1909.

Sir,

I ASKED Count Metternich to come to see me to-day.

Herr von Schoen had mentioned our opposition to the Bagdad Railway as one of the things which caused irritation. I would therefore take this opportunity of explaining

why it was impossible for us to agree to the 4 per cent. increase of the Turkish customs duties without a promise that the additional revenue would not be used for the Bagdad Railway. About one-third of the increase of the duties would fall on British commerce, and this in itself would be much disliked. But, if the money thus secured at the expense of British trade was to be used to make a new through-route to the East and to establish means of communication which would supersede all others in carrying trade from the Persian Gulf into Mesopotamia, and all this under the exclusive control of one foreign Power, then the position of a British Government which had agreed to this would become untenable. It was therefore impossible for us to agree to the increase of the Turkish customs duties unless we had proper safeguards against the use of the additional revenue for the purpose of displacing British trade in Mesopotamia. We felt that we must either have a part in the Bagdad Railway itself, or else we must have a concession which would enable us to establish other means of communication by which we could trade with Mesopotamia on equal terms.

With regard to the participation of France and Russia in the Bagdad Railway, I knew that Count Metternich had objected to a discussion *à quatre*, because such a discussion would put Germany in a minority. But I explained to him that this had not been our object in proposing the discussion. French financiers had already an interest in the project before I came into office, and it was certainly not I who had brought them in. As regards Russia, the position was this. We had on previous occasions been instrumental, or been supposed to be instrumental, in defeating the Russian plans for securing outlets on the sea, first in the case of the Mediterranean, and then in the case of the Far East; this had caused much ill-will in Russia towards us. Now we had succeeded in overcoming this ill-will, and I was very anxious not to revive it as regards the one remaining outlet which Russia was thought to desire—the Persian Gulf—by participating in the Bagdad Railway, when Russia was opposed to it and excluded from it. I had told the Russian Government more than once that I thought they ought not to oppose, in principle, the construction of the Bagdad Railway, but ought instead to make up their minds as to the terms on which they could join in the project. I did not think it would be impossible for the German Government to overcome this difficulty of Russian opposition; indeed, I knew that before the visit of the German Emperor to this country Herr von Schoen had spoken to the Russian Government on the subject.

I told Count Metternich that my object in giving these explanations to the German Government was to prove to them that our action was not dictated by ill-will to Germany, but by the necessities of the case, and that the attitude we were obliged to take up with regard to the increase of the Turkish customs duties was not an attitude taken up behind the back of the German Government in a way to cause irritation and introduce friction into what we hoped would be a friendly discussion.

Count Metternich replied that there would be no objection to British financial co-operation in the Bagdad Railway, but Germany must have the control; in the sense of having a majority on whatever Railway Board controlled the line. He asked me whether we should be satisfied with some measure of control on the southern section of the railway.

I told him it was the southern part that interested us principally.

He asked how much we meant by the southern section, because he thought that the part of the line that went through Mesopotamia would probably prove to be the most valuable part of the whole line.

I replied that this was a question for experts at a later stage in the discussion.

Count Metternich observed that the Bagdad Railway did not, as it was at present intended, touch Russian territory, or prevent Russia from making a separate outlet for herself to the Persian Gulf.

I said that this was no doubt the case, but in my opinion the Russian needs would best be met not by the making of a separate route to the Gulf, but by establishing, under Russian control, connections with the Bagdad Railway. This would give Russia an interest in the outlet created by the Bagdad Railway.

Count Metternich asked whether, if participation was arranged for us, we should be willing that the additional revenue secured by the 4 per cent. increase should be used to make the Bagdad Railway.

I answered that if we came to an agreement about participation we should, of course, not wish to hinder the progress of the railway; but we had promised the new régime in Turkey that we would not apply for any kilometric guarantees in connection with concessions in which we were interested, and therefore we could not press the Turkish Government to allocate any more of their funds to kilometric guarantees. I

should have to consider how far this question was involved in the further progress of the Bagdad Railway.

I am, &c.
E. GREY.

[39751] No. 46.

Admiralty to Foreign Office.—(*Received October 29.*)

Admiralty, October 28, 1909.

Sir,

I AM commanded by my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty to acquaint you, for the information of the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, that it has been brought to their notice that Mr. W. K. D'Arcy, who is known to them as a director of the Anglo-Persian Oil Company and the original concessionnaire of the oil-bearing territory now being worked by that company in Persia, is making application to the Turkish Government for the grant of a right to search for oil near Bagdad.

My Lords are aware that associated with Mr. D'Arcy in his enterprise are Mr. C. W. Wallace and other directors of the Burmah Oil Company, who are the only firm producing oil fuel at the present time in British possessions. The Burmah Oil Company have gone to much trouble and expense to produce an oil suitable for use in His Majesty's ships, and have entered into a contract with the Admiralty for its supply over a term of years.

My Lords gather that if Mr. D'Arcy acquired the right to exploit the territory, he would be backed by a British syndicate which has had wide experience in oil matters, and I am to request, therefore, that you will lay the above-mentioned facts before Sir Edward Grey as lending additional support to the representations which it is understood are already being addressed by the Foreign Office on behalf of Mr. D'Arcy's application for a concession.

I am, &c.
C. I. THOMAS.

[39519] No. 47.

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. Marling.

(No. 684.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Foreign Office, October 29, 1909.*

RAILWAYS in Asia Minor.

Please see Sir G. Lowther's despatch No. 870 of the 22nd October.

A suggestion has been made by Beckett, who has heard of the grant to Russia of preferential rights for the Samsoun–Sivas Railway, that this line should be linked with the Mediterranean at some point on the Gulf of Alexandretta, starting from a point on the Samsoun–Sivas system outside of the Russian sphere. If Beckett puts this scheme forward, you are authorised to give him your support.

[39890] No. 48.

Consul Devey to Sir Edward Grey.—(*Received October 30.*)

(No. 46.)
Damascus, September 13, 1909.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to submit a short report on schools and education.

As elsewhere in Turkey, schools are to be classed in four sections, as (*a*) Government, (*b*) native communities, (*c*) foreign missions, (*d*) private. Of these, (*a*) and (*d*) are entirely, or nearly so, attended by Moslems, while (*b*) and (*c*) mainly, but not exclusively, by non-Moslems. Roughly speaking, rather less than 30,000, or about 25 per thousand, of the vilayet resident population attend schools, but so illiterate is the province generally that one may frequently find a village of 300 to 400 inhabitants where not more than two can read and write, while of those who annually present themselves for the conscription 95 per cent. at least are wholly unlettered. Save at the provincial metropolis, there are few opportunities for a child to pass from a primary to a secondary school, and none to enter a high school.

Little, indeed, is acquired by the scholar attending the primary school save a faint smattering of the three "R's," of which he will probably lose all trace (to the extent of 50 per cent. of those taught) long before emerging from his "teens." Want of system and inefficiency on the part of the instructor contributes to this, and he, by the way, is very poorly paid—say, less than 20*l.* a-year.

The Director of Public Education of the province has an assistant, an accountant, and five clerks to his staff, with advice from a board of eight elected unpaid members (notables of Damascus city, some of whom are very slightly educated themselves and little enlightened), but whose counsel is scarcely heeded. The director can only plead, in excuse of the poor condition of education in Syria vilayet, that he has no funds beyond the small sum (6,100*l.*) specified below, nor can he extract from his Ministry any pecuniary assistance at all, or from any other source whatever. He also happens to be somewhat unpopular, as, being a Turk, and having only a bare acquaintance of the Arabic language, he does not ascribe to it its true importance as the vehicle of instruction for the populace of higher grade as well as of the lowest; in the Government secondary and high schools the regulations impose the employment of the Turkish tongue. This gentleman, having just paid a visit to Constantinople, is hopeful of obtaining more funds, and purposes to found certain new district schools, of which there is urgent need.

Section (*d*), referred to as of "private schools," comprises merely elementary day teaching of the simplest kind; there are no boarding schools, nor is any kind of permit usually applied for or granted for them nor any supervision. They are mainly kept by individuals, unpaid Moslem sheikhs, who teach the Koran, with a little reading and writing and perhaps the elements of grammar, in their own house or a hired room at the rate of 5 or more piastres per pupil per month. This class of school is to be found all over Turkey, and usually the village schoolmaster holds his classes chiefly during the winter or in slack times for agriculture, and is paid for his work by measures of corn. It is estimated that in Syria vilayet there are 600 of these day schools scattered among the 1,200 towns and villages.

The old medresses of Damascus are now almost neglected, and most of such buildings are fallen down, while the Aykaf assigned for maintaining them have been largely appropriated by covetous sheikhs and have dwindled away. Those schools which still exist are kept by hereditary rights by sheikhs, who live in them with the pretence of giving lessons to a few young sheikhs coming to them once a-month. Such medresses in Damascus now may number about thirty, giving no profit whatever beyond the means of living for their holders. This condition of affairs has now been the rule for untold scores of years past, and not even did Midhat Pasha think of remedying it. A slight effort was made last year by the Union and Progress Committee agents to ensure the better disposal of the Avkaf funds, but it only led to a strong combination of the sheikhs interested, under the name of Society of Ulema, claiming to protect Islam; and their union was dangerous to local good order, but this society has since melted away of itself. The Young Turks abandoned the idea, and left things as they are, awaiting a more favourable occasion.

Mission schools of this district may be classed as Protestant, Roman Catholic, Orthodox, and Jewish. The former have charge of upwards of 3,000 scholars, and are maintained by Great Britain, Denmark, and the United States of America. The British Syrian Mission has schools for girls only, at Damascus, Baalbek, and Hasbaiya; attendance, about 750 girls. The Irish Presbyterian Mission teach about 350 boys and 250 girls in schools at Damascus and at the village Bloudan; the London Jews' Society about 130 of both sexes, and they provide specially for the poorest class of Jews only, who pay no fees. The Church Mission Society has school at Sidi and Husn, attended by 130 boys and girls. The American Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions educate some 1,200 children in the north and western parts of this district. The Danes provide for about 300 poor children in kazas to the east of Damascus city, besides having a medical mission.

Roman Catholic mission schools are managed by Lazarists, Franciscans, and Jesuits, and afford rather higher education to some 1,200 boys and girls; they charge fees and take boarders.

The Orthodox mission schools are maintained by the Russian Palestine Society, and number about eighty, half for boys and half for girls.

These mission schools are the most appreciated by the various Christian sects of the people, and comprise two-fifths of the general attendance. The elements of foreign languages, English, French, and Russian, can be usually acquired in them respectively, but Syrians are rather anxious to learn English than French or Russian, as so many nowadays emigrate to America. In general, parents pay extremely low fees.

The "Alliance Israélite" provide higher education for about 200 scholars and five primary schools for some 900 Jewish children at Damascus.

I have not much to say about communities' schools, which can boast little more than one-third of the attendance of mission schools.

These establishments consist of free schools maintained by patriarchates, bishoprics, elders of villages, ancient Avkafs, public subscriptions, or other ways of general co-operation, for the education of the children of respective communities or sects. Such schools are to be found in towns and villages, and some of them, as those in Damascus, are well managed. Their number is about 130, attended by at least 4,000 pupils. In general, no fees are levied except where the school could not exist otherwise, and then nowhere more than 1 mejidie (*3s. 6d.*) a-month. The Greek Orthodox schools are the most highly rated, and have benefited by Russian system and aid. Indeed, non-Moslem schools throughout Syria are moulded scholastically in high degree by the number and variety of Christian missions, and it is difficult, or rather misleading, to review Syria vilayet only, without considering Beirout, Jerusalem, the Lebanon, and Aleppo, where the heads of the different missions are to be found rather than at Damascus, and where high-class education is provided, especially at Beirout.

There are seven printing-presses at Damascus alone (and nowhere else in the vilâyet), but not one of them so large as the American one at Beirout. Of newspapers, besides the weekly official gazette "Syria," there are two only, one daily and one published twice a-week; but most residents of Damascus subscribe to Beirout journals.

Authorship would seem to be wholly neglected. Bookshops are not to be found save for school use or books of reference, and these would be chiefly in Arabic.

I have, &c.

G. P. DEVEY.

Inclosure in No. 48.

Returns of Schools, &c., in Syria Vilayet.

Table I.—Government Schools with Free Tuition.

Idadié = High. Rushdi = Secondary. Ibtidiyé = Primary.

Schools.	Where.	No. of Schools.	No. of Teachers.	No. of Pupils.		Remarks.
				Boys.	Girls.	
Medical	Damascus ..	1	24	175	..	Annual cost, 1,400*l.*, is not included in the local Education Budget.
Idadié, and including Rushdi	Damascus and Hamah	2	31	582	..	Only idadié pupils are required now to pay £T. 2 per pupil per annum for tuition.
Arts and crafts ..	Damascus ..	1	6	50	..	Boarding—founded by Midhat Pasha, but poorly maintained.
Rushdi	" ..	1	4	..	85	Besides the rushdi for boys included in the idadié.
"	Chief towns of the district	6	14	129	..	Besides the rushdi of Hamah included in the idadié.
Ibtidiyé	Damascus ..	10	21	660	387	8 schools and 13 teachers for boys, and 5 schools and 8 female teachers for girls.
"	Districts ..	65	70	3,353	443	59 schools and 61 teachers for boys, and 6 schools and 9 female teachers for girls.
Total ..	..	89	170	4,939	915	Grand total of pupils .. 5,854.

4,764 boys and 915 girls receiving tuition from 125 male and 21 female teachers (exclusive of the medical school) at an annual cost of about 6,400*l.* Instruction is given in Turkish chiefly in the secondary and high schools; Arabic only can be used, of course, in the primary ones.

The idadié of Damascus is both for boarders and day pupils; boarders paid

£T. 12 per annum, for which sum they were well clothed, fed, and lodged. Now this sum is raised to £T. 20, which may decrease the number of boarders.

Table II.—Communities' Schools.

Community.	No. of Schools.	No. of Teachers.	No. of Pupils.	Remarks.
Greek Orthodox ..	50	80	1,500	80 per cent. boys and 20 per cent. girls.
" Catholic ..	20	40	700	" " "
Syrian Catholic ..	8	10	300	" " "
Jacobites	7	10	300	All boys in Homs district.
Maronites	6	10	250	" Bekaa and Baalbek.
Moslems	20	20	500	All boys.
Druzes	20	20	500	"
Total ..	131	190	4,050	

The Armenians and Armeno-Catholics, of small numbers, possess no schools.

Table III.—Foreign Missions' Schools.

Mission.	No. of Schools.	No. of Teachers.	No. of Pupils.	Remarks.
Papal Missions ..	8	40	1,150	Only in Damascus city.
British Missions ..	12	50	1,580	
Danish Mission ..	7	8	300	
American Mission ..	20	35	1,200	
Russian Mission ..	40	160	5,100	
Alliance Israélite ..	2	14	1,160	Only in Damascus city.
Total ..	89	307	10,490	

Table IV.—Recapitulation.

	No. of Schools.	No. of Teachers.	No. of Pupils.	Remarks.
Government schools ..	89	170	5,854	
Communities' schools ..	131	190	4,050	
Foreign Mission schools	89	307	10,490	
Private schools ..	600	600	12,000	
Totals ..	909	1,267	32,394	

[39902] No. 49.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received October 30.)

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and by direction of Viscount Morley, forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, with reference to India Office letter of the 27th October, copy of enclosures in a letter from the Foreign Secretary to the Government of India dated the 7th October, relative to the proposed American missionary dispensary at Mutra.

India Office, October 29, 1909.

Inclosure in No. 49.

Government of Bombay to Government of India.

(Telegraphic.) P. *September* 29, 1909.

KINDLY refer to your telegram dated the 15th instant. It has been stated by Colonel Jaykar that the wishes of the British Government in the matter regarding the property at Muscat will not be opposed by him.

[39950] No. 50.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 31.)

(No. 345.)

(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, October* 31, 1909.

LYNCH concession.

With reference to your telegram No. 688 of the 29th October, I saw the Grand Vizier and the Minister for Foreign Affairs yesterday, and spoke most emphatically on the lines of your instructions.

They both appeared to be far less hopeful of bringing the matter to a conclusion before the opening of Parliament on the 14th November than they were on the occasion of the Ambassador's interview with them on the 21st instant. The Minister of Finance and the Minister for Foreign Affairs assert that the matter will have to be put before the Chamber. Sassoon and other deputies of Bagdad are chiefly responsible for the opposition to the scheme. They have organised a formidable campaign in Young Turk circles, and have succeeded in making it appear as though Lynch's scheme, together with the projected British railways and the irrigation scheme, were the prelude to political designs on Mesopotamia and in Arabia in the future. They appear to be backed by Germans, and there are fairly conclusive indications that the same line is being taken by French financiers who are closely connected with the Deutsche Bank, and whose attitude is due to their annoyance at the opposition of the National Bank in the matter of the loan.

The question will be deliberated on at the Council of Ministers to-day, and Rifaat Pasha will communicate the result to me to-morrow.

[39990] No. 51.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 1.)

(No. 866.)

Sir, *Constantinople, October* 21, 1909.

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith a despatch from Mr. Chafy, His Majesty's acting vice-consul at Adana, reporting panic among the Christian population of Adana at the approach of Bairam, as well as the capture of the Kurdish brigand Abdino.

I have, &c.

GERARD LOWTHER.

Inclosure in No. 51.

Acting Vice-Consul Chafy to Sir G. Lowther.

(No. 12.)

Sir, *Adana, October* 13, 1909.

WITH regard to the threatened panic at the approach of Bairam indicated in my last despatch, No. 11, I have the honour to report that the fears of the Christian population of Adana unfortunately continue. The exodus to Mersina incidental to these periodic psychological outbursts has begun, and Adana at Bairam bids fair to present the same deserted appearance as on Constitution Day.

I personally continue to believe these fears quite groundless, and merely the natural outcome of the shattered nervous system of the Christian population. The vali, who is fully alive to the situation, informs me that he has replied in a similar sense to a query on this subject from the Minister of the Interior. He made the earliest rumours of danger the subject of careful investigation, and has called a

meeting of Christian notables and done his best to reassure them. He declares his intention of addressing the Mussulmans in the mosque. No proof of genuine danger has so far been forthcoming, and the Christians are ironically accused of this time themselves arranging to compass their own destruction. I suspect that extra police precautions will be taken during the next few days, and the military commandant tells me that he has still seven battalions of troops under his command in the vilayet. So that ample force should be at hand to repress the slightest outbreak of disorder.

The chief firebrands of the former massacres have happily been removed from the scene. Ihsan Fikri, Abdul Kader Baghdadi, and Ismail Safa left Adana on the 3rd instant, the two former for Angora and the Hedjaz respectively. The ex-Ferik, Reinzi Pasha, was sent to Mersina, where, I understand, he is to accomplish his three months' detention, on the 9th instant. He was escorted to the station by Mehmed Ali Bey, and installed with all regard for his comfort in a first-class compartment of the train, which he shared with Commander Adam, of His Majesty's ship "Barham," returning from a passing visit to Adana. The private attitude of the Young Turks here towards those responsible for the massacres accords strangely with their protestations of disgust with those whom their policy forbids them to punish adequately.

In this connection it is interesting to note that the attitude adopted by the "Times" and the "Temps" towards this policy has had a most cheering effect on those in authority here.

The vali and Mehmed Ali Bey are extremely proud of the capture of the celebrated Kurdish brigand Abdino, which I had the honour of reporting in my despatch No. 11. The vali could not resist the temptation of displaying his prize to me in the konak last night, and I had the pleasure of hearing him inform 6 foot of magnificent fettered and unrepentant manhood that a dog's death awaited him.

I have, &c.

R. P. W. CHAFY.

[39991] No. 52.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 1.)

(No. 867.)

Sir, *Constantinople, October* 21, 1909.

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith a despatch from Mr. Chafy, His Majesty's acting vice-consul at Adana, containing notes on the progress of relief and other measures of the Vali of Adana.

I have, &c.

GERARD LOWTHER.

Inclosure in No. 52.

Acting Vice-Consul Chafy to Sir G. Lowther.

(No. 13.)

Sir, *Adana, October* 13, 1909

I HAVE the honour of submitting the following notes on the subject of the vali's relief and other measures.

The definite appointment of Djemal Bey as governor of the vilayet of Adana is, I think, very well received here. He continues to deserve the good opinions formed of him here, and, so far, his only apparent fault is his excessive optimism. Misgivings are beginning to be expressed by those who seem to make pessimism a trade in Adana and Mersina as to the genuineness of his multifarious schemes and intentions for the good of the province, and the sooner he gives a tangible proof of his reforms in the shape of bricks and mortar in this city the better.

I have not yet had opportunity to elicit from him a connected account of his tour and its results. He returned on the 9th instant from a nine days' circuit of the vilayet, having visited Hamidieh, Osmanieh, Erzin, Dortyol, &c. He seems to be satisfied with the tour on the whole, though I gather that the way was not altogether unbeset with difficulties. He evidently addressed himself to the delicate task of reconciliation. His telegram to the Minister of the Interior from Dortyol, as reported in the "Tanin" of the 5th October, has doubtless been brought to your Excellency's notice. He assures me—and I have received independent corroboration of this fact—that instances of genuine repentance on the part of the Muslims for what they have done are not

uncommon. Apart from the dictates of their conscience, now is the time when they are beginning to appreciate the extreme inconvenience they have occasioned themselves by killing off the useful industrial element of the population.

The vali contemplates visits of inspection to other parts of his province later on in the autumn.

Among his projects are the improvement of roads and the establishment of a regular daily post between Adana and Eregli. He has been approached from various quarters with schemes for the navigation of the rivers in the vilayet and for irrigation.

As I have received no instructions with regard to the connection of the local branch of the Ottoman Bank with the relief measures, I presume that your Excellency does not take into serious consideration the possibility of abuse in that quarter. M. Rossi has arrived to relieve M. Grabowski in the direction of the bank during the latter's shortly contemplated leave.

I am pointing out to the vali the desirability of his issuing a second relief report showing the progress of work and expenditure up to this point, and hope to be able to submit a translation to your Excellency by the next mail.

The work of deciding claims and apportioning the all-insufficient funds proceeds steadily but slowly, and involves interminable Medjlisses *à la turque*. Building has actually begun in the cazas, but up to the present Adana has not changed its appearance of desolate ruin. I understand, however, that the contraction by the municipality of a loan of £T. 30,000 for the erection of a new quarter of the city has received the sanction of the Ministry of Finance.

About £T. 1,500 have so far been contributed towards the cost of erecting the projected orphanage. Your Excellency has possibly read the interview with the vali on this and other subjects, the appearance of which in the "Stamboul" of the 5th October I had the honour of notifying in my last despatch. The orphanage scheme continues to be made the subject of objection from all sides.

A certain Mrs. Shepard, of the American Mission, who during a long residence at Aintab has built up a wonderful embroidery industry, is at present in Adana, and is interesting the vali in the placing of such work for women in Adana on a sound business footing. He receives the idea most favourably, and has formed a special commission for its promotion.

I have, &c.
R. E. W. CHAFY.

[39993] No. 53.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 1.)

(No. 871.)
Sir, *Constantinople, October 23, 1909.*

WITH reference to Sir Gerard Lowther's despatch No. 847 of the 15th, I have the honour to forward herewith a despatch from His Majesty's consul at Erzeroum reporting on the difficulties encountered by the authorities in carrying out reforms in the district.

I have, &c.
CHARLES M. MARLING.

Inclosure 1 in No. 53.

Consul Shipley to Sir G. Lowther.

(No. 30.)
Sir, *Erzeroum, October 11, 1909.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Excellency herewith the copies of a despatch which I have received from Mr. Safrastian on the subject of the difficulties encountered by Salim Pasha, Acting Governor-General of Bitlis, in his efforts to introduce a certain measure of order and good government in his district.

With the exception of the murder of the Armenian Khatchadour by the adherents of the Hamidié Colonel Khalid Bey at Kapûlu, the misdeeds referred to by Mr. Safrastian do not appear to be of a very serious nature, and your Excellency will note, as indicating the change which has taken place in the situation, that the victims of these misdeeds are by no means Armenians alone. The chief difficulty, according to Mr. Safrastian, would at present seem to lie in the opposition which is being offered

to all attempts at reform by corrupt officials and by certain Kurdish notables, this opposition making itself especially felt in the matter of the introduction of a more equitable system of farming of the tithes and of the reinstatement of Armenians in lands of which they have been dispossessed by the Kurds. As far as the general maintenance of order is concerned, it would, I venture to submit, be in every way desirable that, as suggested by Mr. Safrastian, the acting vali should receive all possible support at the hands of the Imperial Government. The land question, however, in view of the conflicting nature of the interests involved, is obviously one of very serious difficulty, and would seem, if a satisfactory solution is to be arrived at, to require investigation by an impartial authority which would be independent of local pressure.

I have, &c.
H. S. SHIPLEY.

Inclosure 2 in No. 53.

Mr. Safrastian to Consul Shipley.

Sir, *Bitlis, September 28, 1909.*

I HAVE the honour to report that in the course of the last three weeks the state of things in this town seems to have perverted into bad owing to a secret rivalry and deep-seated enmity between two classes of forces.

On the one side is Salim Pasha, the acting vali here, almost entirely alone and single-handed in his courageous efforts to overpower and overthrow several dishonest reactionary officials, and thus to give the deathblow to their criminal existence; on the other side are an army of the above corrupt officials representing all departments of the local administration, who, bound to each other with ties of complicity and interest, have sworn allegiance to their common oath to back each other to the bitter end in this life or death struggle against the new system of government.

It is about two months since Salim Pasha arrived here and his Excellency has shown on several occasions his sincere desire to introduce reforms in all branches and departments of the local Government. Some time ago he once told me that, "There is nothing here as Government, and I wished there existed not the present sham one, as then it would have been easy to create something out of nothingness. But our task is double and difficult, because there is decay and rottenness, and therefore we must first wipe off the decay and then create."

In my humble opinion, the acting vali has very well grasped the situation, and his opinions characterise properly the state of things in this vilayet.

Some Questions of Occupied Land.—A month ago some Armenians of Khuyt (nahié of this kaza) complained to the acting vali to the effect that Kurds had occupied their land in the village of Shen, and that the latter were not willing to restore them, notwithstanding that they possessed the title-deeds. Salim Pasha entrusted the gendarmerie office to make an enquiry in the village and report to him the truth. The gendarmerie officers, however, all of whom are natives, caused the matter to be forgotten. On the further protest of Armenians a few days ago, the vali threatened to dismiss the officers if the report was not presented to him. I understand from good sources that the officers are raising, and will raise still, ridiculous objections with the hope to drag the matter until the fall of snow, in which case the question will be dropped itself.

In similar circumstances the case of the land of Armenians in Taghavank (nahié of Khuyt) was brought before the administrative council here last week. The Armenians of Taghavank appeared in the council with their title-deeds in hand to reclaim the ownership of their property. The vali communicated to the council the recent orders of the Home Ministry, according to which any piece of land was to belong to the man who possessed the title-deeds ("tapit-kotchan"). The land in question belonged, therefore, to Armenians. But the cadi, the mufti, and the Kurdish member of the council opposed very strongly to the statements of the vali, demanding that the right of property should be decided at the courts. Curious discussions had taken place as regards the matter, and in the end it was left unsolved as the former.

The question of land unlawfully occupied by Kurdish beys and agas, or temporarily mortgaged and transferred to the names of the above by Armenians, is of the most vexatious nature. It is to be feared that the settlement of such questions in an administrative way will encounter opposition and difficulty as long as the main body of the executive is composed of officials of corrupt and reactionary leanings.

Some Misdeeds.—A fortnight ago two mules were stolen in Tchukur, a nahié four hours from here. The mudir of the nahié received orders from the vali either to find out the mules or he himself would be dismissed. On the other hand, however, the mudir was under pressure on the part of Hadji Nedjmeddine Effendi, one of the most powerful and honoured Kurds here, to conceal the fact, as his two sons were involved in the theft. The mudir, complying himself rather with the instructions of Hadji Nedjmeddine (from whom he had taken promises that he never should be dismissed) than with those of the acting vali, attributed the theft to the Armenian Taschnaksutiun committee. Salim Pasha dismissed the mudir, and it was then that the dismissed mudir revealed to the vali the facts with available evidence. Thus it is quite certain now that the two sons and the Hadji himself, the most respected sheikh and hodja in Bitlis, and a member of the administrative council here, are ordinary thieves.

The acting vali is said to be unable to treat the above hadji as a thief, as the latter is of high standing and of powerful influence, and that he, the vali, is not quite sure of the assistance of the Central Government. It is no doubt interesting to know that many thefts and misdeeds have been thus concealed for years past under pressure.

Another of the local leading officials, Nufus Naziri Sadullah Effendi, was caught some time ago in a flagrant breach of the law. He took a bribe of £T. 100 from a Kurdish murderer, and conciliated him with the father of the Kurd murdered in order thus to prevent the father from pursuing the lawsuit. The secret was discovered, however, and the conduct of Sadullah Effendi was proved. But, so far, Sadullah is as honoured a Nufus naziri (director of the Census Department) as he used to be before.

After many protests and struggles on the part of the Armenians to buy their own tithes with additional bid, the tithes of Armenian villages were again sold to Kurdish oppressive tithe-farmers with such shameful intrigues and manœuvres that one feels abhorrence to describe the details. In many cases the orders of the vali in behalf of Armenians were defied and disobeyed by provincial authorities on the strength of forged documents and impertinent lies.

In my humble opinion, these few facts suffice to show more or less the manners and the way of working of the administrative machinery in this town, the hateful existence of which, it is to be hoped, is only a question of time.

Some Murders and Attacks.—Among the prevailing peace and security the following murders and attacks have occurred in the course of the last five weeks:—

On the 28th of August last the Armenians of Kakarlu, village in Bulanik, expelled from their village one Khalid Bey, Hasananli Hamidié Colonel, who had unlawfully seized house and land in the village. A few days later his servants killed by night one Armenian Khatchadour of Kakarlu while sleeping on the thrashing-floor. Two murderers are arrested and imprisoned.

On the 2nd instant one Armenian of Teghut, village in Akhlat, was wounded by Hadji Yasin Effendi, a Kurdish tithe-farmer, for having resisted to the dishonest measuring of corn by the latter. The assailant is imprisoned.

Since the beginning of the month of Ramazan (15th September) two cases of alleged cursing of Mahommedan religion by Christians have happened. The latter one, which occurred on the 22nd instant, seems to have been rather a serious one. Two scoundrels, an Armenian and a Kurd, quarrelled in the former's coffee-house here, and the latter rushing out to the street shouted that the Ghiour cursed his religion in these sacred days of Ramazan. A very dense crowd of fasting fanatic Moslems gathered round the building to kill the curser. The attitude of the police, in view of such a threatening danger, was really pitiable; they began to request the furious mob to disperse instead of employing force for the purpose. In consequence of the threats of Kurds to massacre the Christians, many Armenians escaped from the bazaars. Encouraged by the blameworthy conduct of the police, one certain Barber Redjeb cursed in the presence of hundreds the constitution and its authors, who gave the Ghiours such liberty.

The acting vali conducted himself the enquiry until midnight. His Excellency, however, could not get any evidence either from these sordid Kurds or Armenians in order to inflict an exemplary punishment upon Redjeb.

The Moslem mob is reported to be excited since that event, but I do not believe that there is any sign of excitement, except the usual emphasised fanaticism in Ramazan.

Five days ago a Kurdish caravan was attacked at night at a distance of three hours from here by a big band of robbers. Fire was opened on both sides, and one horse was killed and the chief muleteer wounded. The police and the gendarmerie have

been so far impotent to discover the robbers. The attack has taken place in the zone of influence of above Hadji Nedjmeddine Effendi, but it is understood there is a tendency in the gendarmerie office to accuse the members of Taschnaksutiun committee of the act.

This and such attacks not worth while to mention are stated as being tried by a well-organised body of reactionary officials as a test to the seriousness of Salim Pasha's activity.

I humbly venture to dwell upon the importance and necessity of assisting Salim Pasha in his reconstructive steps, and to humbly request His Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople to countenance his good intentions, in cases that the acting vali should apply for the consent of the Central Government.

I have, &c.

A. S. SAFRASTIAN.

[39999] No. 54.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(*Received November* 1.)

(No. 877.)

Sir, *Therapia, October* 27, 1909.

IN reply to your despatch No. 324 of the 18th instant, I have the honour to report that the actual findings of the court-martial on the disturbances at Adana have never been published, nor do I think that it will be possible to procure them, as the proceedings were strictly private. I presume, however, that, inasmuch as the trial resulted in the punishment of both the vali and the military commandant, it may fairly be held that these officials were found to have failed in their duty, although the lightness of the sentences passed on them, viz., in the case of the vali incapacity to hold any public office for six years, and in that of the ferik three months' imprisonment in addition to that penalty, would appear to indicate that the court took a lenient view of their delinquency.

The German Ambassador informs me that he has received a curt reply from the Sublime Porte, declining all liability for the losses of foreigners, and he stated further that he understands that in making this reply the Turkish Government takes its stand on the attitude of the Russian Government in regard to the claims of Turkish subjects for losses suffered during the revolutionary disorders in the Caucasus in 1905–1906. Similar refusals have been received by the American and Spanish representatives.

As regards the evidence on which he relies, Baron von Marschall informed me that he has the testimony of two or three German subjects, besides natives, that the soldiery actually fired and plundered various houses.

Instances of the conduct both of the authorities and of the soldiers may be found *passim* in the reports from Adana, Alexandretta, Antioch, and Aleppo, notably in Major Doughty-Wylie's despatches of the 21st April, 1st May, 7th May, and 24th July.

I have, &c.

CHARLES M. MARLING.

[39950] No. 55.

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. Marling.

(No. 600.)

(Telegraphic.) P. *Foreign Office, November* 1, 1909.

LYNCH concession.

Please see your telegram No. 345 of yesterday's date.

In the course of an interview which I had to-day with Tewfik Pasha, I gave the latter a short résumé of all the negotiations on the subject of the concession which have taken place up to date. I informed him that we trust that Hilmi Pasha will not now go back on what he has said, and that he will fulfil his promises. I added at the same time that His Majesty's Government are at a loss to understand the attitude adopted by the Minister of Public Works. The good faith of the Turkish Government would certainly be called in question if they were now to give the concession to any other company, and such action would create a very bad impression.

In reply to these representations Tewfik Pasha agreed that the Porte were bound to act up to the declarations already made by them, and promised to telegraph strong representations in that sense to the Turkish Government.

[40277] No. 56.

Mr. D'Arcy to Foreign Office.—(Received November 2.)

Bylaugh Park, East Dereham, October 30, 1909.

Dear Sir Charles,

I AM troubling you with this letter to tell you that my friends and I have been seriously considering the practicability of joining hands with Mr. Harmsworth and his friends in respect of the Turkish oil concession. I have had considerable correspondence and a long interview with Mr. Harmsworth on the business, and I venture to enclose you a copy of my last and final letter to Mr. Harmsworth on the subject, so that you may know our reasons for having to go on alone.

With many apologies, yours, &c.

W. K. D'ARCY.

P.S.—Pray do not let this occasion you the trouble of an answer.

W. K. D'A.

Inclosure in No. 56.

Mr. D'Arcy to Mr. Harmsworth.

Bylaugh Park, East Dereham, October 29, 1909.

Dear Mr. Harmsworth,

I HAVE now had an opportunity of discussing the Turkish business with my friends and of showing them your letters, including the one last received.

In the course of our discussion it soon became clear that the objects which you and we have in view are utterly divergent. You told me that your idea was, if you acquired the concession, to float a company in respect of a piece of territory at Mendate, and then another company in respect of another piece of territory and so on. Given successful flotation, it is obvious that there is money to be made in that way by the concessionnaire; but the question of whether these different companies could work at a profit is a different one. It is a question which our experience leads us to answer in the negative, and no man can possibly say into whose hands their control and management will fall.

We, on the other hand, are seeking the concession to work ourselves as oil producers, refiners, and sellers, and we have no intention of floating any company nor of parting with any portion of the concession. Nor do we intend to form any companies other than such as may be required (if any) by the Turkish authorities.

For these reasons it was decided that it would not suit us to join hands with any group.

Thanking you for giving me the offer of joining you, yours, &c.

W. K. D'ARCY.

[40275] No. 57.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received November 2.)

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of Viscount Morley, forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of correspondence relative to increased salutes for the Sheikhs of Mohammerah, Koweit, and Bahrein.

India Office, November 1, 1909.

Inclosure 1 in No. 57.

Government of India to Viscount Morley.

(Secret.)

Simla, September 30, 1909.

My Lord,

IN compliance with the request contained in paragraph 3 of your Lordship's Secret despatch dated the 25th June, 1909, on the subject of salutes to be

accorded to the Sheikhs of Mohammerah, Koweit, and Bahrein, we have the honour to forward, for the information of His Majesty's Government, a copy of the correspondence, from which it will be seen that the new scale of salutes will come into force with effect from the 22nd September, 1909.

We have, &c.

MINTO.
O'M. CREAGH.
J. O. MILLER.
W. L. HARVEY.
S. P. SINHA.
H. H. RISLEY.

Inclosure 2 in No. 57.

Government of India to Major Cox.

(Confidential.)

Simla, July 26, 1909.

WITH reference to your letter dated the 8th August, 1908, regarding the salutes accorded to the Sheikhs of Mohammerah, Koweit, and Bahrein, I am directed to inform you that His Majesty's Government approve the proposal to increase the salutes of the Sheikhs of Mohammerah and Koweit from five to twelve guns, and that of the Sheikh of Bahrein from five to eleven, and to grant a salute of five guns to the eldest sons of the Sheikhs of Mohammerah and Koweit, and of three guns to the eldest son of the Sheikh of Bahrein, on occasions when they visit one of His Majesty's ships as their father's representatives. The salutes will be fired, as in the case of the existing salutes to the sheikhs, on the termination of an official visit.

2. I am to add that the increased salutes will in each case be personal to the present chiefs, and it should be explained to them that it is within the discretion of the Government of India to continue the salute or not to their successors. It is left to your discretion to decide when it would be opportune to make the announcement to the sheikhs concerned. It seems desirable that before doing so you should consult Sir G. Barclay as to how far the proposal to increase the salute of the Sheikh of Mohammerah is affected by the sheikh's position as a Persian subject.

3. I am to request that the Government of India may be furnished in due course with a report of your proceedings, as the Admiralty desire to be informed officially of the date when the arrangements come into force. The naval commander-in-chief, East Indies squadron, has, however, been directed to instruct the commanding officers of His Majesty's ships in the Persian Gulf to act on the above scale of salutes when instructed to do so by you.

Inclosure 3 in No. 57.

Major Cox to Government of India.

Bushire, August 22, 1909.

I HAVE the honour to refer to the correspondence ending with your letter dated the 26th July, 1909, on the subject of the salutes to be accorded to the Sheikhs of Mohammerah, Koweit, and Bahrein.

2. I think it will be as well that I should make this further reference to Government as to the precise steps to be taken to inform the three sheikhs severally of the decision at which His Majesty's Government have been pleased to arrive, as slightly different procedure seems to me to be advisable in each case.

3. The Sheikh of Koweit might, I suggest, be informed officially in writing by the resident that, in view of our friendly relations and as a personal compliment, His Majesty's Government have been pleased to issue instructions that when he visits one of His Majesty's ships a salute of twelve guns will in future be fired in his honour on his leaving the ship, and that five guns will be fired for his son when visiting a ship on his father's behalf. It would be added, in conclusion, that the Government of India reserved discretion to continue the salute or not in the case of his successors.

4. The present Sheikh of Mohammerah has, I believe, never called upon a British man-of-war. For prudential reasons he prefers to exchange visits at the consulate. Consequently he is probably not sure what salute would be given him if he did. Moreover, at times he is acting as Governor-General of Arabistan, in which capacity he

would *ex-officio* get seventeen guns. I am of opinion that in his case it would be sufficient for His Majesty's consul to inform him verbally that a salute of twelve guns has been prescribed for Sheikh Mubarek and a similar salute will be fired for him personally when, as Sheikh of Mohammerah, he visits a British man-of-war, and five guns for his son when representing him. He would also be informed of the discretion reserved to themselves by the Government in the case of the sheikh's successors.

In this regard I attach copies of the telegrams exchanged between myself and His Majesty's Minister, from which it will be seen that his concurrence has been obtained.

5. In the case of the Sheikh of Bahrein, the enhancement of the salute might be made somewhat more of in the intimation sent him by the residency. It might be explained to him that it is in view of his long period of rule over Bahrein, and with the wish to add to his personal dignity among his compeers, that His Majesty's Government, on the recommendation of the Government of India, have been pleased, &c.

6. If the Government of India generally approve of the procedure suggested for each case in the foregoing paragraphs, I beg that the enhanced salutes may be considered to come into force without further reference, on our receipt of their reply; on which the necessary communications will be made to the sheikhs concerned and the senior naval officer, Persian Gulf division.

Inclosure 4 in No. 57.

Major Cox to Sir G. Barclay.

Bushire, August 15, 1909.

(Telegraphic.) P.

UP to the present time salutes of five guns have been accorded to the Sheikhs of Koweit, Mohammerah, and Bahrein when visiting British men-of-war. Now, however, British political officers entitled to salutes of eleven guns having been appointed to Koweit and Bahrein, it has been considered expedient to raise the personal salute of the former to twelve and of the latter to eleven guns. A proposal has also been made to grant Sheikh Khazal a personal salute of twelve guns, and his eldest son, when representing his father, five guns.

Do you see any objection? When the Sardar Arfa is acting Governor-General of Arabistan he would of course receive the salute due to that rank. The settlement of the question of the salute at Mohammerah is actually only a formality, as the sheikh seldom ever visits a man-of-war, but prefers to exchange visits at the consulate. I venture in consequence to suggest that it is only necessary for you to accord your personal approval of the proposal, and that there is no need to approach the Persian Government on the subject.

Inclosure 5 in No. 57.

Sir G. Barclay to Major Cox.

Tehran, August 17, 1909.

(Telegraphic.) P.

WITH reference to your telegram dated the 15th instant, I concur with you in considering that no reference to the Persian Government is necessary, and to the proposed salute I have no objection.

Inclosure 6 in No. 57.

Government of India to Major Trevor.

(Confidential.)

Simla, September 22, 1909.

Sir,

I AM directed to acknowledge the receipt of Major Cox's letter, dated the 22nd August, 1909, on the subject of the salutes to be accorded to the Sheikhs of Mohammerah, Koweit, and Bahrein.

2. In reply, I am to inform you that the Government of India approve Major Cox's proposals.

3. The new scale of salutes will come into force with effect from the date of these orders.

I have, &c.
S. H. BUTLER,
Secretary to the Government of India.

Inclosure 7 in No. 57.

India Office to Admiralty.

India Office, October 28, 1909.

Sir,

WITH reference to your letter dated the 10th June, 1909, as to the salutes to be accorded to the Sheikhs of Mohammerah, Koweit, and Bahrein, I am directed to enclose, for the information of the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, copy of a letter from the Government of India, from which it will be seen that the new scale of salutes has been brought into force with effect from the 22nd September, 1909.

A copy of this letter is being communicated to the Foreign Office.

I am, &c.
R. RITCHIE.

[40474] No. 58.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received November 3.)

India Office, November 3, 1909.

Sir,

WITH reference to previous correspondence ending with the letter of this office, dated the 12th October, 1909, as to the communication made to the German Government regarding the situation at Abu Musa, I am directed by Viscount Morley to enclose copy of further papers received from the Government of India on the question.

Subject to the concurrence of Secretary Sir E. Grey, Lord Morley would propose to inform the Government of India that there is no objection to Messrs. Wönckhaus's shipping the 400 to 500 tons of oxide referred to in their telegram.

Sir E. Grey will doubtless consider whether the German Government should be informed that this permission has been accorded, notwithstanding what was said in the note addressed to them on the 21st September last. In the event of the firm desiring to effect any further shipment, it seems questionable whether the permission of His Majesty's Government should be given.

I am, &c.
R. RITCHIE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 58.

Government of India to Viscount Morley.

(Telegraphic.) P.

October 28, 1909.

YOUR telegram of the 10th instant as to Abu Musa. Reference is invited to letter of 12th ultimo from resident, Persian Gulf, forwarded with letter of 30th ultimo from Secretary to Government of India, Foreign Department. In view of note to German Government, dated the 21st ultimo, resident asks whether permission to ship 400 to 500 tons of oxide not yet removed, may be accorded to Wönckhaus. Instructions by telegraph are solicited.

Inclosure 2 in No. 58.

Government of India to Major Trevor.

(Confidential.)

Simla, September 30, 1909.

Sir,

I AM directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, Confidential, dated the 12th September, 1909, reporting the action taken by you on the representation made by

M. Wassmuss, German vice-consul, regarding certain conditions imposed on Messrs. Wönckhaus and Co. in connection with the shipping of oxide from Abu Musa.

2. Your action is approved.

I have, &c.
L. W. REYNOLDS,
Deputy Secretary to the Government of India.

Inclosure 3 in No. 58.

Major Trevor to Government of India.

(Confidential.)

Sir, *Bushire, September 12, 1909.*

I HAVE the honour to invite a reference to the resident's letter dated the 21st August, 1909, on the subject of a further shipment of oxide from Abu Musa by Messrs. Wönckhaus and Co.

Before writing his letter of the 14th August to the German consul, Major Cox wrote to the residency agent telling him to inform Hassan-bin-Sumaiyeh that he could collect and ship oxide for the German firm on condition that he gave an undertaking in writing not to send any armed men to the island, nor to attempt to interfere with the mines, nor to take any oxide other than that left on the beach by the steam-ship "Louis" or the heaps taken out from the mine by himself and partners. In addition, Major Cox instructed Agha Bedr to state that Abdulla-bin-Hassan was only authorised to proceed to the island when the ship arrived as before.

During the first week of this month M. Wassmuss called on me and introduced the subject of Abu Musa. He said that he heard that Agha Bedr had imposed conditions on the German firm. I remarked that the conditions were imposed on Hassan Sumaiyeh. M. Wassmuss said that the German firm had no objection to the conditions about no fire-arms being taken or to that specifying the oxide to be taken, but they were particularly anxious to send Abdulla-bin-Hassan Sumaiyeh to look after the mining. I informed M. Wassmuss, in reply, that I could not admit that the matter was one in which Messrs. Wönckhaus and Co. had any right to interveno, and that the conditions on Hassan Sumaiyeh were imposed solely in order to prevent any regrettable incident with Sheikh Suggar's people. M. Wassmuss then asked me to look up the conditions and see whether they were imposed by Major Cox. This I did, and subsequently informed M. Wassmuss in a private note that I saw no reason to alter the arrangements made by Major Cox.

I now trouble Government with this letter, as I think M. Wassmuss will complain to his Government about this matter. There is really no ground for doing so, as Hamad Sumaiyeh, brother of Hassan, is the man who always takes charge of the coolies, and can do the work well. Abdulla, on the other hand, is an intriguer and mischief-maker. He is suspected by the Criminal Intelligence Department of smuggling arms into India, though unfortunately no proof can be obtained. He tried to get up a dispute when the steam-ship "Gulistan" went to Abu Musa in June (*vide* my telegram dated the 23rd July, 1909). He has also mixed himself up with politics, &c., at Lingah to such an extent that we have seriously thought of taking steps to deport him, but have refrained from doing so as it would have looked bad while this case was going on.

In the circumstances it seems quite justifiable to prevent his going to Abu Musa except when the ship goes to load the oxide, and I do not think the Germans will be likely to press the point. It seems advisable, however, to lay the facts before Government in case the matter comes up.

M. Wassmuss informs me that Messrs. Wönckhaus and Co. wish to have 400 to 500 tons of oxide ready for a ship about the middle of October. This will entail coolies going to the island about the 20th of this month.

I have, &c.
A. P. TREVOR, *Major, First Assistant Resident (in charge of Residency).*

[40339] No. 59

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(*Received November 3.*)

(No. 318.)

(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, November 2, 1909.*

LYNCH concession.

With reference to your telegram No. 690, an impression was made on the Ministers by the Turkish Ambassador's communication; nevertheless, they are at heart no more favourably disposed. Rifaat Pasha informed me that the Turkish Government did not wish for amalgamation, and that they were endeavouring to bring about a settlement simply with a view to gratifying His Majesty's Government.

Two days ago, after the council, the Minister of Education was delegated to interview Mr. Whittall on the five disputed points. The results were as follows:—

It was proposed to settle the difficulties attending the form of the convention by making use of the expression "exclusive right," or similar words, instead of "concession," and by referring to Mr. Whittall not as a "concessionnaire," but as a "capitalist." The points relating to customs immunities and to the steam-ship service from Bussorah to Mohammerah have been virtually conceded.

Mr. Whittall categorically refused both the demand of the Turkish Government that the British company should relinquish its rights as soon as the convention is signed, and their pretension to half the capital in fully paid-up shares; however, the Minister of Education believes that he may succeed in persuading his colleagues to modify their views on this point.

The Minister of Education informed me that the Council of Ministers, which would meet to-morrow, would decide both this question and that of the tariff, the latter question being one on which a compromise would be impossible.

A further point has now been raised by the Turkish Government, who insist on inserting a clause providing that if the irrigation scheme renders the river non-navigable the new company shall be unable to claim compensation. Willcocks has given them a written statement to the effect that the irrigation scheme may have this result in five or ten years, and as Turkish Government rely very much on his opinion they are making their consent absolutely conditional upon the insertion of this clause.

Please inform Lynch of substance of above.

I venture to submit that it would be in the company's as well as in our own political interests to accept this condition. My reasons are:—

1. It is probable that the river will be navigable longer than Willcocks gave Turkish Government to understand; and

2. The new company will be able to work on river above latitude of Bagdad even after lower rivers are not navigable, whereas if the scheme for fusion falls through, it will presumably be impossible to obtain compensation when navigation is closed, and British interests will vanish completely.

[40518] No. 60.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(*Received November 4.*)

Sir, *India Office, November 3, 1909.*

WITH reference to Sir A. Godley's letter dated the 5th August, 1908, as to the treatment of British Indian traders at Katif, I am directed by Viscount Morley to enquire whether it has been found practicable to make any representations to the Ottoman Government as to the immediate payment of the sum of 2,821 rupees, admitted by the Porte to be due to the traders in respect of excess duty on dates.

Lord Morley would be glad to be favoured with Sir E. Grey's views on the wider question, discussed in Sir A. Godley's letter mentioned above, of moving the Porte to give effect to the undertaking in their "notice" of 1905 to place no restrictions on the trade of British subjects in Katif. But Lord Morley has no desire to press the point, should Sir E. Grey think it inexpedient to raise the question at present.

I am, &c.
R. RITCHIE.

[40632] No. 61.

Mr. Lynch, M.P., to Foreign Office.—(Received November 5.)

Dear Mr. Maxwell, *House of Commons, November 4, 1909.*

I ENCLOSE a memorandum on Mr. Marling's telegram, which I trust you will find clear.

By reopening all these questions at the last moment the Council of Ministers is evidently trying to wreck the negotiations, or, failing that, to beat time until Parliament meets on the 16th instant, when they will get Parliament to discuss the question and then shelter themselves behind an adverse decision taken by Parliament. This must clearly be prevented. Even were they to accept the convention before Parliament meets, there would still remain the statutes and the "cahier des charges" to be discussed; and, while this discussion was proceeding, they could still get Parliament to decide unfavourably on the whole question.

I understand that the convention could not be actually signed until both these documents have been agreed.

I think you will agree with me that, if this device is to be prevented, something really effective will have to be done at once. I should venture to suggest that the Turkish Government should be informed that, unless they are prepared to keep faith with us and with His Majesty's Government, and to sign the convention without further delay, His Majesty's Government will wait until the Porte sees its way to fulfil its promises, and will meanwhile break off the negotiations, so that there will be no proposal before the Turkish Government or Parliament, His Majesty's Government at the same time suspending the negotiations for the increase of the customs duties on British trade with Turkey, a considerable portion of which trade has been created by the British river service in Mesopotamia; also that, if in the meantime Parliament should deal with the matter and shut the door upon a revival of the settlement arrived at as regards the river service, His Majesty's Government would view the matter in a very grave light.

Yours sincerely,

H. F. B. LYNCH.

Inclosure in No. 61.

Memorandum by Mr. Lynch, M.P., on Mr. Marling's Telegram of November 2, 1909.

THE phrase "Bussorah moiety of service" in line 3 refers, I think, to a demand made by the Minister of Public Works that the present British company should undertake to cease plying between Bussorah and the mouth of the Shat-el-Arab. This section of the river is open to the flags of all nations, and the demand was therefore an impossible one. It appears that this demand has now been waived.

2. The next point raised in Mr. Marling's telegram concerns the form of the convention and a demand made by the Turkish Government that there shall be a cessation of the rights of the British company upon the signature of the convention.

If you will turn to the text of the convention that has all along been under discussion, and in which the Turkish Government have promised that there shall be no further essential changes, you will observe that it has the form of a tripartite agreement between the Turkish Government on the one hand and Messrs. Picot and Whittall on the other hand. This is the form given to the convention by Mr. Hamilton, K.C., in order best to meet the object which both the Turkish Government and ourselves have in view, namely, a fusion between the two services.

The Turkish Government confides, cedes, and transfers the rights of the Turkish river service to Mr. Whittall, and the British company confides, cedes, and transfers their rights into the same hands. Mr. Whittall on his part engages to form a new company to take over these rights, which company has to be an Ottoman company, subject to Ottoman law and flying the Turkish flag exclusively.

In order that there might be no doubt as to what the rights of the new Turkish company are, articles 2, 3, and 6 proceed to define these rights in precise terms, and of course it would not be open to the Turkish Government hereafter to argue that the rights defined by these articles do not coincide with the rights transferred, and that therefore the articles are of no effect. To that extent the convention has undoubtedly the nature of a new concession; and it was always understood in this

sense. The Turkish Government are now anxious to avoid giving it the form of a new concession, by substituting the words "exclusive rights" for "concession," and by calling Mr. Whittall a "capitalist" instead of a "concessionnaire."

I have not consulted our lawyers, but I can myself see no objection to this, because it seems to me that the substitution of the words desired by the Turkish Government does not affect the meaning of the convention as above defined.

As regards the demand made by the Turkish Government, that there should be a cessation of the rights of the British company upon the signature of the convention, permit me to endeavour to make the point clear to you. It is quite clear that under the terms of the convention the new company which takes the place of the present British company is an Ottoman company, flying the Ottoman flag, and subject to Ottoman law. When, therefore, that company has been formed, it is plain that the British company will no longer be able to exercise its rights, those rights having been transferred to the Ottoman company; but I understand that what the Turkish Government demand is a formal annulment, not only on the part of the British company, but also on the part of the British Government, of those rights. I do not see how it is possible to "confide, cede, and transfer" to the new company rights which have previously been formally annulled. The whole form of the convention would have to be recast. I must also point out that, if the British Government and ourselves were to give a formal annulment, as the Turks desire, it might be very difficult for the British Government to insist on the restoration of the *status quo ante* in case the Turkish Government were at any time to endeavour to put an end to the new Ottoman company. Were such an attempt made, three courses would be open to the British Government: either to insist that the new company should continue its operations, or to claim the restoring of the *status quo ante* with compensation to the Turkish company for the loss of its fuller rights, or, finally, merely to claim compensation and acquiesce in the disappearance of the British interest in the river service. The last course could not possibly suit the British Government, and therefore it is important that they should do nothing to render it very difficult to restore the *status quo ante*.

I have considered it my duty to make this clear to you; but I may say that, if the British Government do not regard the matter in this light, and if they consider that after a formal annulment it would be equally open to them, in case of a repudiation of their obligations by the Turkish Government, to insist upon a restoration of the *status quo ante*, I shall be willing to acquiesce in that view, and to resist the convention accordingly, although I do feel that if at this stage we consent to an essential change of this nature our case in resisting any further essential changes will be considerably weakened.

3. I think I now understand what Mr. Marling means by "half the capital in fully paid-up shares." We undertook to supply a certain amount of working capital, to be represented by fully paid-up shares in the new company; these shares gave us our majority of shares. When the Turkish Government insisted upon equality of shares, it followed that half this working capital would have to be subscribed by them. They now wish to keep their equality of shares, and not to subscribe the half of the working capital, but to receive the shares represented by this half without paying for them. I need not trouble you with this point further, because it is a purely financial one.

4. I come last to the point about irrigation. The article in the convention referring to this matter is article 12, paragraphs 3 and 4. The language of the article was drawn up by Mr. Whittall in consultation with the late Minister of Public Works. You will observe that it is very moderate and sensible language.

I think it should be pointed out to Mr. Marling by telegram at once that his presumption that there would be no claim for compensation under present circumstances is incorrect. The British Government and the present British company have without any doubt very important vested interests in the navigation of these rivers, and if this navigation were endangered by an irrigation project the company would certainly assert its vested interests. I may point out to you that this is also the view of the Minister of Public Works.

On the 20th October, in the course of his interview with Colonel Picot, he asked that the paragraphs in article 12 relating to irrigation should be omitted, on the ground that, to use his own words, "Government is by law responsible for any damage done to the concessionnaire by its own acts." He therefore regarded the irrigation paragraphs as superfluous.

I am prepared to omit these paragraphs should you consider it desirable to do so, and to allow our case to remain as it now is, though I do so with some reluctance, as I think the paragraphs in question are valuable indications of policy; but of course we

could not for a moment entertain the proposal that we should worsen our position by consenting to forgo any claim. Not only would we be worsening our position, but we should also find it very difficult to obtain any new capital for the development of the navigation.

I hope to send you later the correspondence from our agents in Bagdad reporting the recent interviews with Sir William Willcocks. Sir William assured them that not only would the navigation not be impaired by his schemes, but that it would be positively improved.

H. F. B. LYNCH.

November 4, 1909.

[40850] No. 62.

Memorandum communicated by Tewfik Pasha November 5, 1909.

LES mémoires du Foreign Office en dates des 29 octobre dernier et 1er de ce mois contiennent certains malentendus. La Sublime Porte a été dès le début de cette affaire guidée par le désir de concilier les légitimes intérêts du pays avec le souci de donner une nouvelle preuve de ses sentiments amicaux envers le Gouvernement anglais. Dans ce dernier but elle est même allée fort loin. Elle a accepté certaines des conditions de Mr. Lynch qu'elle aurait voulu refuser. De sorte que, de tous les points litigieux, il ne restait jusqu'au premier de ce mois que la question du partage en parts égales des capitaux-généraux de la société projetée et la question du tarif. Sur ce premier point c'est bien la société qui a essayé de varier, car la Sublime Porte avait toujours demandé 50 pour cent. Cette demande est d'autant plus légitime que l'apport du Gouvernement Impérial dans l'affaire étant bien plus considérable que celui de Mr. Lynch il a droit à un traitement du moins égal. Il a donc toujours insisté sur ce point. Quant au tarif, Sir Edward Grey lui-même conviendra que le Gouvernement Impérial doit se réserver un certain contrôle sur ce point, qui est des plus importants. Néanmoins, il a tenu à être conciliant et pratique dans cette affaire en s'appliquant à arriver à une entente susceptible de concilier les intérêts des deux parties. Malheureusement, un fait nouveau vient de surgir qu'il craint être de nature à faire échouer toute l'affaire.

Sir William Willcocks a adressé au Ministère des Travaux Publics une lettre dans laquelle il dit que les travaux d'irrigation dont l'exécution dans ces parages est décidée, travaux d'une importance capitale pour la prospérité de ces contrées, auront pour effet de rendre impossible la navigation des grands navires sur le fleuve et quelque temps après même des plus petits bateaux. Sir William demande au Gouvernement Impérial de sauvegarder son droit de disposer des eaux du fleuve dans l'intérêt des travaux d'irrigation.

Voici comment il finit sa lettre :—

"Le mot d'ordre, dans les Indes, se résume ainsi : les fleuves pour l'irrigation, les chemins de fer pour les communications."

Dès lors la Sublime Porte a la conviction que le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté Britannique, dans son esprit d'équité et ses sentiments impartiaux, voudra bien reconnaître l'impérieuse nécessité où elle est de tenir compte des déclarations susdites d'une autorité telle que Sir William Willcocks.

Ambassade Impériale ottomane, Londres,
le 5 novembre, 1909.

[40600] No. 63.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(*Received November* 5.)

(No. 350.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, November* 4, 1909.

MESOPOTAMIAN irrigation.

See my telegram No. 348 of the 2nd November.

Rifaat Pasha asked me to call on him to-day, and informed me that no decided action had been taken with regard to Lynch at yesterday's Council of Ministers, as they considered it useless to act until they knew whether Lynch would agree to drop his

claim to compensation (see clause referred to in my above-mentioned telegram). Rifaat added that, in order to protect themselves from liability to compensation, the Government must insist unconditionally on Lynch's renouncing his claim and accepting this clause. I replied that this line of action seemed most unjustifiable, and that the Porte could not insist on the other points they had raised recently, if Lynch gave way in this matter. Rifaat said that he understood the result of Whittall's interview with the Minister of Education to have been that settlement was possible on all points except that relating to the equal division of the paid-up shares, the possibility of incurring parliamentary criticism making it difficult for the Government to give way on this point. I pressed his Excellency for a favourable reply, and finally he reluctantly promised, if Lynch would abandon compensation, to do what he could to persuade his colleagues to give way on all the other points. In obtaining this, I was careful in no way to commit Lynch to anything definite. Rifaat will let me know the result of his representations to his colleagues to-morrow.

The convention has to be prepared and sent to Lynch for his approval, which makes it impossible for the matter to be settled before the meeting of Parliament on the 14th.

Following is very confidential :—

Rifaat Pasha's language leaves no room for doubt that Willcocks, who is hostile to Lynch's concession, has imbued the Minister of Public Works with various specious arguments against the scheme.

[40833] No. 64.

Mr. Lynch to Foreign Office.—(*Received November* 6.)

Dear Mr. Maxwell, 33, *Pont Street, London, November* 5, 1909.

I ENCLOSE an extract from a long letter, dated the 1st November, received this morning from Colonel Picot. The rest of the letter I need not trouble you with, but I think this part of it will interest you.

I think I am right in assuming that the late French Ambassador, M. Constans, left Constantinople for good some time ago. It ought, therefore, now to be possible for the French Government to keep their representative in Constantinople clear of the Franco-German financial schemes, of which the Imperial Ottoman Bank is the pivot on the French side. Surely it is monstrous that French policy in Constantinople should join in an attack of the nature described by Colonel Picot. It ought not to be possible for the directors of the Imperial Bank at Constantinople to be able to threaten the Turkish Government with the displeasure of the French Government—such displeasure to be made felt in refusing quotations on the Paris Bourse—if the Porte shows favour to British commercial interests in Turkey. I would venture to suggest that the time may have come when the French Government might be approached with a view to the dissociation of their policy at Constantinople from intrigues on the part of the French financial group against British interests and in favour of German interests.

Yours sincerely,
H. F. B. LYNCH.

P.S.—When you have done with my memorandum on Mr. Marling's telegram may I have it back for a day to take a copy, as I find the typist omitted to take one.

Inclosure in No. 64.

Colonel Picot to Mr. Lynch.

(Extract.) *November* 1, 1909.

THE situation has, during the last two or three weeks, become very complicated, and the reluctance of the Government to conclude the business has grown day by day. It is difficult to indicate clearly the causes which have acted on the Government. On Friday Javid Bey conveyed to Graves a message setting forth that political considerations had arisen detrimental to the business ; that the Imperial Ottoman Bank and the Deutsche Bank had given the Government to understand that if further favours were shown Great Britain, by way of concession or otherwise, their Governments would find means of expressing their disapproval of the favouritism shown to Britishers.

It appears that the Imperial Ottoman Bank dropped some 200,000*l.* of prospective

profit owing to Cassel's competition over the 7 million loan. This hits both the above banks—the Deutsche Bank has a share in all Imperial Ottoman Bank loan business and *vice versâ*—severely, and their discontent is keen. Javid Bey wished to know if the Imperial Ottoman Bank were threatening "on their own," or whether the French Government were supporting them.

Graves took the message to Marling, and Marling talked it over with me.

He believes that the Cabinet has been frightened by this intrigue, though he is of the opinion that the French Government knows nothing of it. I do not know what steps he has yet taken to allay the anxiety of Javid Bey.

One threat was that the French financial market would be closed to Turkey for the future.

Since Willcocks has been here I have noticed a change also. Willcocks's scheme plans a railway from Bagdad to Tadmor, Homs, and Tripoli. This would dish the Bagdad Railway. Willcocks talks to anyone and everyone. He will restore Mesopotamia, build railways, &c. Germany thinks his schemes will be financed by Great Britain, and that all are part of a plan to deal a blow at the Bagdad Railway.

They are therefore sowing the seeds of suspicion in the minds of these half-educated young men of the Cabinet. They look upon our concession as the first step in the accomplishment of British political ambition, and they have again been frightened.

The question of the fusion has been put before the military staff, as it is supposed to have strategical bearings.

Then Sassoon has been working for all he is worth, bombarding the Minister of Public Works with telegrams, petitions, &c.

The communication from the Foreign Office to the Turkish Ambassador in London, which was in writing, strengthened Marling as nothing else could have done, and the fact that the Cabinet has delegated the business to Nail Bey shows that Haladjian has lost some of his power for evil. We believe he is a German-paid instrument. Javid Bey is not as helpful as one might have expected, considering all our Government did for him over the loan through Cassel.

[40600] No. 65.

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. Marling.

(No. 695.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Foreign Office, November* 6, 1909.

LYNCH concession.

Please refer to your telegram No. 350 of the 4th November.

On condition of immediate settlement of the matter before the meeting of Parliament, Lynch is willing to leave open question of compensation by dropping out of the convention paragraphs 3 and 4, which deal with irrigation. It is likely that the refusal of this proposal will lead to an entire breaking off of negotiations.

[39751] No. 66.

Foreign Office to Admiralty.

Sir, *Foreign Office, November* 6, 1909.

I AM directed by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 28th ultimo respecting the concession for exploiting the oil fields of Mesopotamia.

I am to inform you that Mr. D'Arcy has for some time received the strong support of His Majesty's Government in his endeavours to obtain this concession from the Turkish Government, and that this support will be continued. Sir Edward Grey is of opinion that as between British candidates for this concession, where their financial stability is equally beyond question, equality of treatment in the matter of giving official assistance must be observed; but I am to state that their Lordships' observations in regard to Mr. D'Arcy and the group of financiers associated with him will be borne in mind in this department.

I am, &c.
LOUIS MALLET.

[40875] No. 67.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 7.)

(No. 352.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, November* 7, 1909.

PLEASE see your telegram No. 695 of yesterday respecting Lynch's navigation concession.

Why does he refuse the clause, for which the Porte now asks, abandoning the claim to compensation? He had already, about the middle of last September, consented to the omission of the paragraphs referred to in your telegram.

With reference to my telegram No. 350 of the 4th instant I saw the Grand Vizier yesterday, who told me that, with the exception of that concerning the equal division between the two parties of fully paid-up shares, with regard to which the fear of parliamentary censure made it impossible to yield, he believed that a settlement could be reached on all the points at issue. In order to attain to this, his Highness said he had been obliged to threaten the Cabinet with his resignation in the event of their disappointing the British Government in this matter, and thus impairing the good relations existing between them and Turkey. His Highness, who alluded only remotely to the compensation clause, concluded that the council of Ministers held to-day would definitely settle the question. I told his Highness that if the Porte insisted on their demand with regard to the partition of fully paid-up shares the company might start working without enough capital; he could not reasonably expect that Lynch should pay for shares which were not to be allotted to him.

[40913] No. 68.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 8.)

(No. 879.)
Sir, *Constantinople, October* 29, 1909.

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith a despatch from the acting vice-consul at Adana reporting on the Bairam fêtes there, the impending executions of persons implicated in the massacres, and the tour of inspection of relief work which he was about to make.

I have, &c.
CHARLES M. MARLING.

Inclosure in No. 68.

Acting Vice-Consul Chafy to Sir G. Lowther.

(No. 14.)
Sir, *Adana, October* 20, 1909.

I HAVE the honour to submit the following report on the fêtes of Bairam in Adana:—

As reported in my last two despatches, the Moslem fêtes were awaited in a most uneasy spirit by the Christian population. Many Christians came into Adana from the villages, and, in spite of repeated assurances on the part of the Government and the leading European residents, large numbers of poor people went to the needless expense of a journey to Mersina.

The vali fulfilled his intention of addressing the Moslems in one of the mosques. Referring to the rumours of Mussulman threats, he exhorted his hearers to peace and good-will towards their Christian neighbours, and clearly stated his intention of suppressing the slightest disorder with a strong hand. "I may be a small man," said the vali, "but I am none the less to be feared on that account, as wrongdoers will find to their cost."

The day before the fêtes an Armenian was arrested and imprisoned for openly stating that the Moslems were preparing to massacre the Christians.

Special police and military precautions were taken, and the vali said that he had not himself slept a wink the night before Bairam, but had personally patrolled the streets—a statement which hardly accords with his previous categoric assurance that not only would any outbreak immediately be suppressed, but that such a possibility was not even to be considered ("ces choses-là ne se font pas d'élan chez nous").

In any case, he and the military commandant had evidently determined to take no risks, and all, in fact, passed off quietly. With the exception of two drunken soldiers, one of whom drew his bayonet in the street and both of whom were placed under arrest, and a slight disturbance at the railway-station, where a crowd of Moslem holiday-makers tried to rush the ticket collector, no untoward incidents were brought to my notice.

On the first day of the fêtes the streets were, as I suspected, almost devoid of Christians, and an uneasy feeling pervaded the atmosphere. On the two following days the Christians regained confidence, and the whole place gave itself up to a bank holiday remarkable for its wholesome simplicity. The police are even said to have taken upon themselves to curb the exuberance of the younger part of the population.

I paid and received the usual official visits, and in a ride all round the town was unable to observe the slightest sign of disorder. On the second day the military commandant invited me to a review of the three (two of the Adrianople and one of the Damascus Army Corps) battalions at present forming the garrison of Adana.

The men marched past in fair style, and the mule battery was put through its facings in a creditable manner. Forming his troops into a hollow square the commandant delivered a vigorous speech suitable to the occasion. He impressed on the men the honourable nature of the military calling, exhorted them to live up to the noble deeds of their forefathers, and especially at the present time to be worthy of the high responsibility placed in them, and to remember that the eyes of Europe were upon them. The vali followed with a short address emphasising the importance of confidence and friendly relations existing between officers and men.

The commandant is pleased that the health of the troops has continued good throughout the trying summer in Adana.

On the third day of Bairam I formed one of an agreeable picnic party, consisting of the vali, commandant, the deputies for Adana and Mersina, Arif Hikmet and Ali Munif, who are at present in Adana, officers, and Turkish notables. We drove out to a neighbouring village and inspected the building operations in progress there. Adana is now perfectly quiet and orderly, and the restriction on night circulation, temporarily removed during Ramazan, has not been replaced.

It is to be hoped that the fact that Bairam has passed here far more quietly than usual will have a good effect in tranquillising the country and restoring confidence. The vali was obviously not so easy in his mind as he pretended.

The authorities are chary of information about the impending hangings, as reported in my telegram to your Excellency of the 18th ultimo. As far as I can gather about forty executions, including not more than two of Armenians (probably at Erzin), are to take place very shortly in the Adana vilayet. Some are to be in this city. This wholesale hanging of Moslems is bound to have a disturbing effect, for the time being at any rate, but I do not think the military will encounter any serious difficulty in the execution of their duty. If there is any, it will probably be in the outlying districts, where the American missionaries are far from satisfied with the political situation.

I have the honour to acknowledge the telegram of the 18th ultimo, in which your Excellency approves my expedition of inspection of relief work in my district. I am riding to Hamidieh to-morrow in company of Mr. Chambers, of the American Mission, and Mr. H. C. Woods, who is doing journalistic work here. We shall also visit Missis and other villages, returning to Adana on the 22nd instant. I am very anxious to see what rebuilding has been actually accomplished. It is easy to sit on Medjlisses at the konak and deliberate and receive glowing accounts of the results of our labours, but I am sorry to say the little I have seen of this so-called rebuilding has by no means favourably impressed me. The very fact of their actually placing one mud brick upon another seems to send the Turks into ecstasies of self-satisfaction.

I have, &c.

R. E. W. CHAFY.

[40914] No. 69.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 8.)

(No. 880.)

Sir, *Constantinople, October 30, 1909.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith copy of a despatch from His Majesty's consul at Aleppo, giving such information as he has been able to collect during his

recent visit to Antioch respecting the massacre of Armenians which took place there in April.

I venture to call your attention to Mr. Fontana's suggestion that the Belfast Linen Handkerchief Company should open a branch of their industry at Antioch, which might provide employment for the destitute Armenian widows and orphans. This suggestion, if forwarded by your Office to the company, might be productive of much good.

I have, &c.

CHARLES M. MARLING.

Inclosure in No. 69.

Consul Fontana to Sir G. Lowther.

(No. 27.)

Sir, *Aleppo, October 3, 1909.*

WITH reference to my telegram to your Excellency of the 24th ultimo, reporting that the Antioch court-martial had completed their work, and had referred to Constantinople, for approval, the sentences passed by them in connection with the massacre of Armenians at Antioch last April, and that martial law was consequently no longer in force there, I now have the honour to submit such information as I was able to gather whilst at Antioch regarding the massacre and the present situation in that district.

The court-martial admitted to me that the Armenians had given absolutely no reason or pretext for the massacre. They informed me that 400 Moslems were in prison at Antioch, the majority of whom had been tried and condemned for taking part in the slaughter. The sentences passed varied from imprisonment for one year to capital punishment. I could not, however, learn from them how many persons had been condemned to death. They seemed to fear to commit themselves, and a young officer, a member of the court, who seemed eager to reply to my question, was frowned down by the president. The latter appeared ill at his ease. He is accused at Antioch of having taken bribes from well-to-do criminals. He said that the findings of the court-martial had been referred to Constantinople for approval and confirmation, and could not then be divulged; that the labours of the court had therefore terminated and martial law been revoked, and that it depended entirely upon Constantinople whether the sentences passed should be enforced or no. I ventured to point out that if the court-martial laid sufficient stress upon the extreme necessity for severe punishment not merely for the sake of punishment itself, but as a lasting warning for the future, those sentences would no doubt be confirmed; and I expressed the hope that not only the murderers, but also those primarily responsible for the massacre would meet with their deserts. Some days later, after reaching Suedia from Kossab, I learned that five of the Antioch agas had since been arrested, among them the brother of Rifaat Aga, deputy at Constantinople, the wealthiest and most influential of the Antioch Moslems. It is said that these men are to be banished for life, some to Tripoli of Barbary and others to Asia Minor.

The massacre was worked up by the Antioch agas with the connivance of the authorities. The agas have been locally all-powerful; the idea of liberty and of the curtailment of their petty authority and power to tyrannise was abhorrent to them, and the Armenian was made the scapegoat upon which they were only too ready to vent their reactionary wrath. The Administrative Council was mainly composed of agas or their satellites. The kaïmakam was aged and a mere tool in their hands. Hardly more than a score of regular troops formed the Antioch garrison. Meetings were held in the mosques and word was circulated among the Moslem people that Armenian intrigue had curtailed the Khalif's powers and imperilled the Sheriaat, and that the Armenians were planning armed revolt. The redifs—all of them local Moslems—were called out, and Martinis and cartridges were distributed among the townsfolk. The Armenian bishop, the Catholic priests, and the British vice-consul called upon the kaïmakam and urged him to avert the impending disaster. Mr. Dowek warned the kaïmakam that trouble was brewing in the presence of the Administrative Council, who raised their hands, crying out that it was false. An official letter, written by the British vice-consul to the kaïmakam, calling his attention to the gravity of the situation, met with a contemptuous reply, and telegrams dispatched by the vice-consul to this consulate just before and during the massacre were kept back by the mudir of the Antioch telegraph-office, who still retains his post.

When all was ready, Moslems ran about the bazaar shouting that the Armenians

had risen, thousands of armed men collected, and moved towards the Armenian quarter and the Khans. There were less than 400 male and Armenian adults in Antioch at the time, including non-residents. They had no arms but revolvers, and made no attempt to defend themselves. The redifs, fully armed and with fixed bayonets, streamed past the British vice-consulate from the barracks close by, and joined the rioters. The Armenian houses were broken into, every male above the age of 15 years was murdered, and the quarter was completely pillaged, even the wood-work in the rooms being torn away and carried off. The killing and looting lasted four days. About 350 Armenians were slain. Armenian women relate that often the Moslem cry before slaughtering was "Here is your 'huriyet'—your liberty." A boy of 12 was saved by the women of his family throwing themselves upon him as he lay on the floor. Four of those women were wounded, but the lad escaped with a stab in the leg. Armenian girls were outraged in their houses, or carried off. Towards the end of the massacre a cry was raised that every Christian should die. And it seems certain that only the activity of the commandant prevented an onslaught on foreign subjects, whose lives were, for the moment, in imminent danger.

The kaimakam in office at Antioch at the time of the massacre has been dismissed. He has been tried by court-martial and acquitted, the court finding that he was deceived by his subordinates, and was unaware of what was passing under his very eyes.

Just before the massacre began the Armenian Bishop of Antioch and some Armenian notables had collected in the vestibule of the Gregorian church for safety, or for mutual encouragement. A deputation of agas, including a member of the administrative council, proceeded to the church and assured the bishop and his people that they had nothing to fear. Hardly had the deputation left when the crowd broke into the church and massacred the refugees. The bishop, according to the testimony of a woman present at the time, was tortured and submitted to outrage before he was slain.

It is noteworthy that the Nusairyeh, a Moslem sect whose tenets somewhat resemble those of the Bek-tashi, and who are numerous in the Antioch neighbourhood, took no part in the massacre.

About 400 Armenian widows and orphans, whose husbands and fathers were slaughtered, are still being supported by Government at Antioch. A large house has been hired for them, and each widow receives 6 metaliks (3 pence) for herself, and 3 metaliks for each of her orphan children per diem. They have no employment, no means of gaining a livelihood, and their condition is pitiable.

I wrote some time ago to the agent at Aintab for the Belfast Linen Handkerchief Company, Mr. M. N. Demirjian (concerning whose protection, as far as the company's business was concerned, I received telegraphic instructions in April last from His Majesty's Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs), asking him whether it would be possible to open a branch of his industry at Antioch. At Aintab about 300 women and girls are employed in the factory under Mr. Demirjian. The work (handwork) is not difficult to learn, and can be taught and carried on at Antioch as readily as at Aintab. I received a favourable reply to my letter, Mr. Demirjian stating that he was writing to the directors of the company on the matter, and that, if they could supply more work, he would gladly go and himself start the industry at Antioch. I have not, however, since heard from him, and fear that, unless the company can be induced to interest themselves in the extension of their Aintab industry to Antioch, where it would be eagerly welcomed, there remains little hope of permanent employment for the destitute widows and orphan girls whose breadwinners perished in the massacre.

I called upon the Kaimakam of Antioch, who received me very politely, but did not return my visit. A telegram I sent to the telegraph office at 9 o'clock one evening and two others sent next morning were not dispatched till 4 o'clock in the afternoon. The mudir of the telegraph office is addicted to drink, and he seems to do not his duty but exactly as he pleases. His removal from his present post would be of great service to the foreigners of Antioch, who can neither send nor receive telegrams with any certainty.

At Suedia I heard that the mudir was propitiating towards the Christians, who seemed very pleased with him. But it is to be regretted that the majority of the Moslems in the Antioch–Suedia region are not at heart friendly to the idea of constitutional liberty, to oppress or to be oppressed seems only natural to them, and a form of government under which no oppression would be tolerated must at present appear to them as akin to misrule.

I have, &c.

RAPHAEL A. FONTANA.

[40916] No. 70.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 8.)

(No. 882.)

Sir, *Constantinople, November 3, 1909.*

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge receipt of your despatch No. 326 of the 18th ultimo, enquiring whether any negotiations had taken place between the Russian and Turkish Governments in regard to the preferential rights of the former for railway construction in North Asia Minor, and whether the Porte had proposed any method for overcoming the difficulties placed in the way of railway construction by these rights.

Your enquiry was to a great extent anticipated by His Majesty's Ambassador in the report given in his despatch No. 870 of the 22nd ultimo, and I have been unable to learn that any fresh step has been taken by the Porte.

In this connection I may, however, mention that the French Régie générale des Chemins de Fer is believed to be contemplating applying for a railway concession in those districts, and that they hope to overcome any objections of the Russian Government by engaging Russian capital in the enterprise. The Régie générale des Chemins de Fer is the important company headed by Count Vitalis, and is in close connection with the Imperial Ottoman Bank.

I have, &c.

CHARLES M. MARLING.

[40905] No. 71.

Sir E. Goschen to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 8.)

(No. 372.)

Sir, *Berlin, November 5, 1909.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith copy and translation of a notice published in the "Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung" of the 3rd November, announcing the commencement in the near future of work on the Bulgurlu–El-Helif sections of the Bagdad Railway.

Copy and translation of an article on the same subject in the "Frankfurter Zeitung" is also enclosed, which appears to be based on a report of Herr von Gwinner, director of the Deutsche Bank.

I have, &c.

W. E. GOSCHEN.

Inclosure 1 in No. 71.

Extract from the "Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung" of November 3, 1909.

NOTICE.

(Translation.)

A COMMUNIQUÉ issued by the Bagdad Railway states, according to a report of the 1st November from Constantinople, that, after the Turkish Government has sanctioned the company's plans of construction, work will in the immediate future be begun on the further construction of the portion via Taurus and Amanus to Aleppo, and from there, via the Euphrates, to El-Helif, which is situated between Mardin and Mossul. This portion is 840 kilom. long. A building company, which is to have its seat in Switzerland, and of which the capital amounts to 10,000,000 fr., will conduct the building operations. The administrative council of the company will consist of five Germans, four Frenchmen, two Swiss, and one Austrian. The building company pays for the construction successively out of the proceeds of the Bagdad Railway Loans, Series 2 and 3, which are taken over by a financial syndicate under the leadership of the Deutsche Bank, the committee being formed of the Deutsche Bank, the Banque Ottomane, the Wiener Bankverein, and the Schweizerische Kreditanstalt.

Inclosure 2 in No. 71.

Extract from the "Frankfurter Zeitung" of November 2, 1909.

THE CONTINUATION OF THE BAGDAD RAILWAY.

(Translation.)

"IT is to be built after all!" These words were originally uttered in reference to another German undertaking, which came to grief so miserably; but they may really safely be applied to the Bagdad Railway. The proud work of civilisation which German enterprise undertook to create in Turkey is to be completed. The last few days have brought it considerably nearer realisation. Work on the Bulgurlu–El-Helif section can, according to a report received yesterday from Director von Gwinner, be now begun. The continuation of the Bagdad Railway is assured.

In June 1908 it seemed already to have reached this point. After years of stagnation the signature of the conventions and financial agreements for the continuation of the construction of the railway was arrived at at the end of May 1908 between the representatives of the Sultan and of the Bagdad Railway Company and the Deutsche Bank. The great outstanding difficulties were overcome and all financial obstacles removed. Turkey placed at the disposal of the Bagdad Railway Company 227,000,000 fr. of 4 per cent. State bonds for the provision of funds for the construction of the section 840 miles long; the surplus of the so-called "revenus concédés," i.e., of the income hypothecated for the service of the old Turkish National Debt, and managed by the "Dette Publique," is intended as a security for it. The revolution in Turkey and the debates which took place in the Turkish Parliament at the time regarding the Bagdad Railway, and some hesitation in military quarters as to the route, gave rise to fresh delay. But now these difficulties have also been surmounted. The building plans have been sanctioned; the constitution of the building company for the carrying out of the construction can now be proceeded with; it is to be established in Switzerland with a capital of 10,000,000 fr., and in its supervisory council German interests are to be represented by five members, French by four, Swiss by two, and Austrian by one. It is not as yet known to what degree each group will participate in the taking over of the total 227,000,000 fr. of the Turkish Bagdad Railway Loan; the question is in any case not very pressing, as the period of construction of the section and the issue of the bonds are to be spread over a large number of years (formerly presumed to be six or seven).

The section which the continued construction is to embrace is shown in the subjoined map.*

As is well known the Bagdad Railway is to connect Constantinople with the Persian Gulf, and eventually to be extended across South Persia and Baluchistan to India. The Constantinople–Konia section belongs to the Anatolian Railway system. Of the Bagdad Railway itself, the Konia–Bulgurlu section has so far been built, which is 200 kilom. in length, and which culminates at the immediate foot of the Taurus mountains. The section which has now been sanctioned is 840 kilom. in length, and extends as far as El-Helif, and is later to be carried on 200 kilom. in a westerly direction to Mossul, touch the River Tigris there, and run along its banks as far as the Persian Gulf.

Our second map* shows more clearly the Bulgurlu–El Helif section, which is to be undertaken now. This section is the most difficult of the whole railway, because it will have to cross the Taurus and Amanus ranges between Bulgurlu and Aleppo before reaching the plain of the Euphrates. At one time it was suggested that the railway, after crossing the Taurus should first run to Alexandretta and thence to Aleppo, but apparently the original plans are to be adhered to. The present section opens up for the Bagdad Railway not only a connection with Adana to the already existing section from Adana to the sea at Mersina, but also from Aleppo the connection with the Hedja Railway viâ Damascus, and to Mecca with the branch lines to seaport towns of Beirout and Haifa.

With the completion of the 840 kilom. Bulgurlu–El-Helif section, the longest and most difficult part, 1,786 kilom. of the whole distance of 2,893 kilom. from Constantinople to Bussorah will have been overcome; the remaining 1,155 kilom. of the line as far as Koweit are technically the simplest, and will not under the circumstances offer any very serious difficulties.

* Not reproduced.

[39519] No. 72.

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. Marling.

(No. 346.)

Sir, *Foreign Office, November 9, 1909.*

MR. CLIFFORD BECKETT, the agent of the Euxine and Marmora Development Syndicate, called at the Foreign Office on the 27th ultimo with reference to the scheme for constructing a railway from Samsoun to Sivas with prolongations, as mentioned in my despatch to Sir G. Lowther No. 326 of the 18th ultimo. He was informed that it would not be possible for His Majesty's Government to support the company's application for such a concession on account of the preferential rights held by the Russian Government under the Black Sea Basin Agreement of 1901, but that if his group were able to arrange to co-operate with the Franco-Russian group, which, from Sir G. Lowther's despatch No. 870, it seemed likely would undertake the work, then he might expect official support from His Majesty's Government. Mr. Beckett seemed hopeful of being able to arrange such a combination.

Apart from this, he enquired whether His Majesty's Government would support an application for a concession to build a railway from Youmourtalik, on the Gulf of Alexandretta, inland, but not trenching on the area affected by the Russian preferential rights. He was informed that there was no objection to such a course of action, and you have been authorised by telegraph to support any application in this sense that may be made by Mr. Beckett's group.

Mr. Beckett also asked that we should suggest to the Porte that all applications in connection with this line should also be examined by the Financial Commission, as the transaction of business was most difficult with the Ministry of Public Works.

I shall be glad to have your observations on Mr. Beckett's proposal.

I am, &c.

E. GREY.

[41472] No. 73.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 11.)

(No. 354.)

(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, November 11, 1909.*

WHITTALL will reach Langham Hotel on Friday night, the 12th November (see my telegram No. 353 of the 9th instant).

Lynch negotiations (see my telegram No. 352 of the 7th November).

I hear from Rifaat Pasha that Council of Ministers has decided in favour of fusion, but will insist on 50 per cent. of fully paid-up shares gratis, as well as on the acceptance by Lynch of the clause waiving compensation. With regard to the paid-up shares, Rifaat told me that it was not until about the 20th October that the committee of three Ministers had understood Whittall's proposal for making the Government's total holding up to the required 50 per cent. by ceding 5 per cent. in unpaid shares, and that they had believed that their demand was accepted until they had understood this point.

As regards the scheme coming before Parliament, the Cabinet will have to answer interpellations, but will not submit scheme for sanction of Parliament. I think it is useless to insist on omission of clause regarding compensation, as the Government are not strong enough to agree to it, and I venture to repeat my opinion that Lynch's interests will be best served by accepting the clause.

I also venture to point out that, if Lynch agrees to Turkish demand regarding the shares, and the working capital is thereby reduced too far, it is possible for the company, under the powers arranged for it, to raise additional shares, of which half would have to be taken up by the Government here.

I said nothing to Rifaat which might lead him to expect concessions on either point from us.

[41685] No. 74.

Note communicated by Tewfik Pasha November 12, 1909.

FAISANT un nouvel effort pour aplanir les difficultés avec Lynch, nous avons cédé sur la question des tarifs, qui a une grande importance pour nous, et accepté le texte Lynch. Reste en litige le partage des actions. Nous en avons toujours réclamé les 50 pour cent, tandis que Lynch ne nous en donne que 45 pour cent, et nous cédons cinq autres actions moyennant paiement. Le chargé d'affaires britannique dit que les délégués de Lynch prétendent avoir expliqué aux nôtres, en septembre dernier, qu'ils n'entendaient nous donner les cinq actions en question que contre espèces et que par conséquent notre demande des cinquante actions sans aucun débours ne serait pas fondé. Nos propres délégués affirment, cependant, qu'il n'a jamais été question pour le Gouvernement Impérial ottoman d'accepter une part inférieure à 50 pour cent. Du reste, son Altesse le Grand Vizir avait lui-même déclaré à Sir Gerard Lowther qu'il n'en saurait être autrement, et nous pouvons d'autant moins changer d'avis sur ce point que le projet de fusion n'étant pas précisément populaire chez nous il nous fallait, pour lui donner définitivement corps, pouvoir, le cas échéant, opposer aux objections et critiques éventuelles les conditions équitables de la convention à signer.

La question de part réglée, il ne reste plus que le point soulevé par Sir William Willcocks. En cela, le Gouvernement Impérial tient à mettre sa responsabilité à couvert, de façon à écarter d'ores et déjà, par une clause clairement rédigée, la possibilité de réclamation future.

Je vous prie de porter ce qui précède à la connaissance du Ministre des Affaires Étrangères et lui demander d'intervenir auprès des délégués Lynch en vue d'une solution de l'affaire. Votre Altesse relèvera le sincère esprit de conciliation dont nous faisons preuve envers ceux-ci et aura soin de bien marquer le rôle essentiel que notre amitié vis-à-vis du Gouvernement britannique et notre désir de lui être agréable jouent dans cette affaire.

[41566] No. 75.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(*Received November* 12.)

(No. 355.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, November* 12, 1909.

LYNCH concession.

With reference to my telegram No. 354. I was informed yesterday by the Minister of Public Works, who up to the present has been the principal antagonist of the scheme, that he was ready to agree to the principle of compensation on a limited basis. Colonel Picot has been invited to discuss the matter with him to-morrow.

[39999] No. 76.

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. Marling.

(No. 351.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, November* 12, 1909.

WITH reference to your despatch No. 877 of the 27th ultimo, respecting the claims of British subjects in connection with the recent disturbances at Adana, I am of opinion, in view of the information furnished by you, that it would be inadvisable to submit a list of claims to the Porte for the present. You should therefore take no further action in the matter, unless you learn that similar claims put forward on behalf of the subjects of other Powers have been favourably received.

I am, &c.
E. GREY.

[40474] No. 77.

Sir Edward Grey to Count Metternich.

Your Excellency, *Foreign Office, November* 13, 1909.

WITH reference to the memorandum communicated to the German chargé d'affaires on the 21st September last respecting the situation at Abu Musa, I have the honour to inform your Excellency that, notwithstanding the views of His Majesty's Government as therein expressed, they have authorised the Government of India to allow Messrs. Wönckhaus to ship 400 to 500 tons of oxide which have not yet been removed from the island.

I understand that at the beginning of last month your Excellency hoped to be able to furnish me with a reply to the memorandum of the 21st September within six or eight weeks, and I trust that this may be found possible, for His Majesty's Government would feel themselves unable to grant permission for any further shipments of oxide unless an undertaking is given by the German Government in the sense of the last paragraph of the memorandum above referred to.

I have, &c.
E. GREY.

[40474] No. 78.

Foreign Office to India Office.

Sir, *Foreign Office, November* 13, 1909.

WITH reference to your letter of the 3rd instant, respecting the situation at Abu Musa, I am directed by Secretary Sir E. Grey to state that he concurs in the proposal of the Secretary of State for India to inform the Government of India, in reply to their enquiry, that there is no objection to Messrs. Wönckhaus shipping the 400 to 500 tons of oxide referred to by them.

I am to enclose herewith copy of a note which has been addressed to the German Ambassador at this Court,* in accordance with the suggestion made in the last paragraph of your letter.

I am, &c.
F. A. CAMPBELL.

[41723] No. 79.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(*Received November* 15.)

(No. 886.)
Sir, *Constantinople, November* 4, 1909.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 879 of the 29th ultimo, I have the honour to forward herewith a despatch from the acting vice-consul at Adana reporting on a tour which he has made through some of the villages affected by the massacre.

I have, &c.
CHARLES M. MARLING.

Inclosure in No. 79.

Acting Vice-Consul Chafy to Sir G. Lowther.

(No. 15.)
Sir, *Adana, October* 27, 1909.

I HAVE the honour to submit the following report of a short tour through some of the villages in my district affected by the massacres:—

On the 21st instant I proceeded via Missis to Hamidieh, returning the following day across the plain through Abdoglou, Sheh Murad, and other ruined villages.

My principal object in making this expedition was to inspect the building operations undertaken by the Government relief committee. I was glad to find small two-

* No. 77.

roomed cottages of sun-dried brick are actually being erected, at a cost of about £T. 12 each. There seems a reasonable chance of most of the homeless villagers being housed before the winter, though at the price of much overcrowding. The limited funds at the committee's disposal cannot possibly provide more than one roof per two or three families.

In many villages and small towns, such as Missis, no rebuilding is being undertaken, as the surviving Christians refuse to return to the scene of their sufferings.

The horrible story of the massacres in the villages on the Cilician Plain gains an added poignancy when told by the survivors on the spot. It is useless to enlarge on it here. Human bones are still to be seen amid the ruins.

The chief impression produced by a tour of this kind is that of the diabolical thoroughness of the killing and burning. Not a single Christian house or isolated farm or hovel seems to have been left intact. That the massacres were carefully—even elaborately—organised there can be no doubt. In many cases, as in villages where the Christians outnumbered the Moslems, the basest treachery was used to ensure the destruction of the former. In some places the Christians improvised forts, and put up most gallant fights against great odds.

At Missis I exchanged calls with the newly appointed mudir, a clever and well-educated young Circassian from Smyrna, with the usual utopian Young Turkish views and ideals. He is interesting as typical of the up-to-date young officials being sprinkled over this vilayet. It is a case of defying the Old Testament in a frock coat.

The Kaimakam of Hamidieh, of whom the blackest reports are current, has not yet been abolished.

I am afraid very little faith can be placed in official assurances of Moslem repentance, of reconciliation between the elements, or of restored confidence among the Christians. In spite of the protestations of the Missis mudir not a single Christian will consent to return to the village. An uneasy, suspicious feeling is noticeable among the Moslems in the districts. The Armenians everywhere are displaying a marvellous recuperative energy.

As I had the honour to report to your Excellency in my telegram of the 18th instant, the vali has volunteered the information that about forty hangings are shortly to take place in the vilayet. I previously received the same assurance from the presidents of the Adana court-martial, Kenan and Ismail Fazil Pashas. A general feeling is beginning to grow among the population of Adana that these executions will never take place. Delay or non-execution will be equally injurious to the public state of mind.

I have, after considerable difficulty, persuaded the vali to issue a report showing clearly what has, up till now, been actually accomplished by the Government relief committee. This report is being read before the committee this morning. I hope to have the honour to forward a translation of this document, together with some notes on the subject of Government relief measures, in my next despatch.

I have, &c.
R. P. W. CHAFY.

[41724] No. 80.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 15.)

(No. 887.)
Sir,

Constantinople, November 5, 1909.

THE strained relations existing between the Ottoman Government and the Armenian Patriarch, on which I had the honour to report in my despatch No. 843 of the 12th ultimo, have undergone a sudden change for the better as regards the conflict with the Œcumenical Patriarch, the Government having evidently decided to modify their policy in the matter of the Patriarchal privileges. On the afternoon of the 2nd instant His Highness Mgr. Joachim, accompanied by several members of the Holy Synod and of the Lay Council, called on the Grand Vizier, who received him immediately and conversed with him on various questions relating to the Patriarchal privileges for the space of two hours. It was announced that both the Grand Vizier and the Patriarch were very well satisfied with the results of the interview, at which several long outstanding differences were solved in a manner acceptable to both sides. The Grand Vizier is reported to have declared that there was never any thought of infringing the privileges of the Patriarch, which the Government are determined to respect, but that on the other hand they could not allow the religious heads of the

various communities to interfere in purely civil and administrative questions affecting members of their flocks.

Mgr. Joachim expressed himself as completely in agreement with this view, and in a second long interview which he had the following day with the Ministers of Justice and of the Interior, who came to return his Bairam calls, he carefully explained that he sought no political privileges, and that it was only in consequence of the fact that certain cases of a fundamentally religious nature appeared on first sight to have a political character, that he could be represented as having any such aspirations.

The Ministers assured the Patriarch of the Government's friendly intentions with regard to his demands in connection with the military service of the Greeks and their formation into special companies. This question should have the careful and impartial consideration of the Government, while that of the schools and contested churches in Macedonia must be left to the decision of Parliament.

The change in the tone of the Government authorities, as evinced in these interviews, is probably due to three causes, viz.: the friendly advice which they have received from outside quarters warning them against their antagonistic attitude to the Christian communities, the approaching reassembly of Parliament, which might lead to their being faced with awkward questions from Christian deputies, and the fear that the Greek element in the Empire, if exasperated too far, may unite with the Bulgarians and Albanians, who have already shown some inclination to join forces against the levelling tendencies of the new régime.

The Government has no doubt acted wisely in not pushing to extremes the threatened open conflict with the heads of the Christian communities, but however conciliatory the tone of the interviews may have been, there is no indication in the published accounts of them as to whether any real agreement was reached defining what the Patriarch's privileges are, and what line can be drawn between political and religious cases in the views of the two parties; and it is therefore at present difficult to state whether the Government are *bonâ fide* in their present attitude, or whether it is merely a temporary device to tide over the whole question until some more favourable opportunity shall present itself.

I have, &c.
CHARLES M. MARLING.

[41727] No. 81.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 15.)

(No. 890.)
Sir,

Constantinople, November 8, 1909.

WITH reference to Sir G. Lowther's despatch No. 65 of the 30th January, I have the honour to forward herewith a despatch from His Majesty's consul at Bussorah, reporting the representations he has made to the vali with a view to preventing the recurrence this year of attacks on British vessels by river pirates.

I have, &c.
CHARLES M. MARLING.

Inclosure in No. 81.

Consul Crow to Sir G. Lowther.

(No. 53.)
Sir,

Bussorah, October 16, 1909.

WITH reference to my telegram No. 70 of the 29th ultimo, regarding precautions against river piracy, I have the honour to report that on the 8th December last I forwarded to the vilayet a detailed account of the four authenticated cases of river piracy on British vessels reported in my despatch to your Excellency No. 89 of the 5th December, 1908, and pointed out that the disturbed condition of the river on the Turkish side during the date season could not be allowed to continue. I reminded the vali that both my predecessor and I had repeatedly suggested the measures which ought to be taken, and that, in spite of this, nothing was done to protect sailing craft. I said that six guard posts and two custom-houses already existed between Bussorah and Fao, a distance of 57 miles, and that, if the authorities did their duty, it would be possible to prevent the robbery and violence which annually occurred. I added that

most of the attacks took place at Abul Khassib near the custom-house, and that the disorder had now continued for many years.

In acknowledging my letter of the 20th December last, the vali stated that seven guard-posts already existed, and that at present he was establishing additional posts at Fejat-el-Arab, Tawila, and Abul Hamed.

On the approach of the present date season, I again drew the attention of the present vali to the matter, and enquired whether the eight additional guard-posts had been established as proposed by his predecessor. In view of the chronic nature of the disorder, I asked his Excellency what special measures he proposed to adopt this year to prevent a recurrence of the attacks, I suggested that the gun-boats "Ahis" and "Bagdadi," which were now available, should be stationed at Abul Khassib with special instructions to protect sailing vessels at that spot. I also took the opportunity of reminding his Excellency that His Majesty's ship "Lapwing" had been dispatched to Bussorah for the protection of British shipping engaged in the date trade, and that the commander of that vessel had instructions to co-operate, if required for that purpose, and that he would endeavour to protect British vessels lying in the river against river pirates.

In reply to this letter the acting vali informed me on the 14th October that, in view of my representations, the vilayet had been for some time past in communication with the Minister of War regarding the construction of the eight additional guard-houses, and that arrangements were now being made to estimate the cost of their erection, and that the engineer of the vilayet had been instructed to prepare estimates, and was now engaged in visiting the various spots chosen for that purpose. Pending their construction, the acting vali said that the "Bagdadi" and a steam launch would patrol the river from Bussorah to Fao, and that the acting commodore was taking suitable measures to afford protection to the sailing craft. He added that as there was no disturbance this year in the river, the assistance of His Majesty's ship "Lapwing" would not be required. His Majesty's ship "Lapwing" has gone temporarily to Koweit, but, on her return, the commander will, as previously arranged, use his discretion in taking such measures as are practicable on our side for protecting British sailing vessels from attack in the river.

I have, &c.
F. E. CROW.

[41728] No. 82.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 15.)

(No. 891.)
Sir, *Constantinople, November 9, 1909.*

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith two despatches from His Majesty's consul-general at Smyrna, reporting on (1) attempts to destroy the band of brigands led by Chakirdgi; and (2) an attempt made by a band—supposed to be Andrea's—to capture Mr. Eric Paterson, a British subject resident in Smyrna.

His Majesty's embassy has officially called the attention of the Sublime Porte to the necessity of energetic measures to cope with this state of affairs.

I have, &c.
CHARLES M. MARLING.

Inclosure 1 in No. 82.

Consul-General Barnham to Mr. Marling.

(No. 105.)
Sir, *Smyrna, November 3, 1909.*

WITH reference to Mr. Heathcote Smith's despatch No. 95 of the 6th ultimo, I have the honour to report that Chakirdgi is still at large, though it is believed that he has been badly wounded.

About three weeks ago he was at a village near Baindir midway between Tourbali and Eudemish, where a determined attempt to capture him was made by fifteen Albanian volunteers.

In the fight which took place, three of the Albanians were wounded and one killed, and although the band made its escape, many traces of blood were found on its trail,

and from information given by some villagers afterwards, it is inferred that Chakirdgi himself had been hit.

Yet the fact may be doubted and certainly the authorities do not know where he is.

The band shortly afterwards appeared at the village of Kouron Ova, where they burnt one house, killed several villagers, and carried one man off.

On that occasion Chakirdgi was not with them, but he is reported in a local paper to have himself entered the village of Chamlidja on the 29th ultimo and killed Ibrahim Kehaya, nephew of Hussein, a former brigand, who had since placed himself at the head of a band of volunteers for his pursuit and capture.

The next day he is reported to have entered the village of Kouroudja Ova, where he killed five men and burnt one house, and the following day killed several people at the village of Kishla and Guereli.

The vali has since visited Eudemish to watch the operations against the brigands which are conducted by Arif Pasha, the Acting Commandant of Smyrna.

The vali is now here, and does not speak so confidently of immediate success as he did a week ago.

I have, &c.
HENRY D. BARNHAM.

Inclosure 2 in No. 82.

Consul-General Barnham to Mr. Marling.

(No. 107. Confidential.)
Sir, *Smyrna, November 5, 1909.*

I HAVE the honour to report that about 8 o'clock in the evening of Wednesday the 3rd instant, Mr. Eric Paterson and Mr. Herbert Joly, British subjects, with a cavass named Ali, were proceeding to Mr. Paterson's house in Bournabat when, at a distance of about 250 yards from the garden entrance, they were attacked by brigands. Mr. Eric Paterson was armed with a Mannlicher pistol, and the cavass carried an ordinary revolver. Mr. Joly was unarmed.

As they proceeded, their attention was arrested by seeing five armed men evidently stalking them, and creeping along under the lea of the cemetery wall, which skirts the road.

Seeing at a glance that these men were about to attack them, they first shouted to them to halt, and then, as the men proceeded to close with them, both Mr. Eric Paterson and the cavass fired.

At the same moment other men jumped over the wall and attacked them from in front, so that they were at once surrounded.

They took little notice of Mr. Joly, whom they probably knew to be a poor man, and contented themselves with keeping an eye on him, to prevent his escaping and giving the alarm.

Their sole object was to take Eric Paterson alive, and for that reason they at first carefully avoided firing at him.

The cavass Ali, a man of great strength and courage, stood between them and his young master and kept them at bay until he was wounded and disabled.

Young Eric Paterson, however, made so gallant a fight and such good use of his weapon that they were obliged to turn upon him, and in the melée which ensued he went through a series of hairbreadth escapes, two bullets passing through his clothes. He wounded at least three men and it is confidently believed killed one.

It was a running fight up to the gate where Eric Paterson was very nearly accidentally shot by one of his own cavasses who took him for a brigand.

They all, however, managed to get inside and the gates were closed on the invaders who in their impotent fury fired promiscuous shots into the garden and then made off towards the hills above Bairakli. Their last act before disappearing was to fire a shot at one of the windows.

Mr. Paterson says he counted thirteen men but as it was dark he may well have counted the same men twice over. They were Greeks, and from a few words which he overheard during the fight he imagines that Captain Andrea was among them.

Before dusk two men on horseback were seen loitering near the Paterson's garden and it is thought that they belonged to the same party and that the horses were intended for use in carrying off Eric Paterson to the hills.

The wounded cavass Ali was taken to the Dutch hospital in Smyrna where he died. The bullet had struck his watch and carried with it fragments of glass and metal into the intestines.

A telegram reached me from Bournabat during the night reporting what had taken place, and I at once dispatched a letter to the vali asking that soldiers should be sent at once to Bournabat, that the matter should receive immediate attention, and exceptional steps be taken for the protection of British subjects living in the villages outside Smyrna.

A few soldiers were sent during the night, but as they were not mounted they were useless for the purpose of pursuit.

Unless the Government at once track down these men and make an example by hanging them life will be intolerable for those who, like the Paterson family, have been singled out for capture and ransom.

The Paterson family have lived under the shadow ever since Captain Andrea resumed operations.

A Greek to whom they had done a great kindness was once in prison with Captain Andrea and overheard the latter discussing plans for the capture of Mr. Paterson's eldest son Stanley.

After the general release of prisoners which followed the proclamation of the constitution this man told the story to Mr. Paterson, and from that time it was his custom to bring him regular reports of Andrea's movements, warning him when he should not go out driving or allow his sons to show themselves abroad.

At various times Mr. Paterson has asked me to arrange that the roads should be patrolled, and though he did not tell me so at the time, I now know that it was in consequence of a direct warning which he had received from this man.

Now because Eric Paterson is believed to have killed one of the brigands, his father fears that they may kill his son out of revenge, and that his life will not be safe even in the streets of Smyrna. I think, however, that they will treat him with wholesome respect in future.

However, the brigands and their accomplices among the villagers of Bournabat are no doubt watching to see whether the Government mean to punish them, and if not, they will perhaps plan the capture of one of the other sons of Mr. Paterson.

After all this is only one more incident which illustrates the state of anarchy that prevails in the vilayet of Aidin.

Brigandage is repressed in a fitful half-hearted way which is not calculated to stamp out the evil.

Volunteers are enrolled, guards borrowed from the Régie, or at best troops brought from outside who do not know the country.

One battalion is expected to arrive for the purpose from Constantinople.

The case of Chakirdgi requires special treatment. In the secrecy and rapidity of his movements he reminds one of General de Wet, and his capture requires trained men under a specially qualified leader. Nothing, however, is being done for the organisation and training of the gendarmerie. It is about five months since the European officers took up their duties, but they have no men.

They were promised 600 men from the IIIrd Army Corps to be trained as gendarmes, and are now told that they are not available.

I have, &c.

HENRY D. BARNHAM.

[41729] No. 83.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(*Received November* 15.)

(No. 802.)

Sir, *Constantinople, November* 9, 1909.

ON receipt of your despatch No. 321 of the 15th ultimo forwarding copy of a letter from M. Petridis regarding the present situation in the Sporades Islands, His Majesty's Ambassador requested the British vice-consul at Rhodes to furnish me with a report on the subject, and I have now received from M. Biliotti a detailed report which may be summarised as follows:—

The islanders, who are almost entirely Orthodox Christians, have hitherto enjoyed certain privileges, including—

1. Internal self-government; and

2. Exemption from military service, as well as from customs dues, tithes, land-tax, and other dues in consideration of payment of "maeton," or fixed tribute.

In 1869 the Turkish Government introduced some important administrative reforms, and at the same time levied taxes on salt, tobacco, tezkeres, &c., but at the same time declared that they had no intention of abolishing the existing privileges of the islanders as regarded taxation, nevertheless in 1873 customs dues were imposed, and in 1876 a tax was raised on boats proceeding to the sponge fisheries.

Notwithstanding these impositions the condition of the islanders continued to improve, and they have until lately enjoyed a degree of prosperity from which it may be argued that the taxes levied did not seriously oppress them.

Now, however, as a result of the application of Constitutionalism to all parts of the Empire, the Government are apparently proposing to introduce military service and to assimilate the islanders to the rest of the Empire as regards customs and other taxation, with the result that a panic has arisen in the islands, whose peculiar position will cause the inhabitants to suffer acutely from the proposed measures. For in the first place, the abolition of their privileges will deprive them of revenues on which their whole prosperity depends, and which enabled them on these barren islands to keep up schools, pharmacies, &c., and defray all municipal expenses; while secondly, the summons to military service will mean the disorganisation and destruction of the sponge industry on which the inhabitants entirely depend for their livelihood, inasmuch as the most useful men and best fishermen in this industry are those ranging from 20 to 25 years of age.

The islanders have recently sent in petitions to the Governor of Rhodes praying that there may be no curtailment of their ancient privileges, and demanding continued immunity from military service, failing which nothing will remain for them but wholesale emigrations. M. Biliotti reports that in answer to their petition the governor-general has advised them to send representatives in their cause to Constantinople, and has also promised himself to send in a report on their case to the central authorities.

Since the receipt of M. Biliotti's report, your despatch No. 335 of the 25th ultimo has reached me, and I am asking M. Biliotti to inform me whether he has any confirmation of the conciliatory assurances alleged by M. Petridis to have been given to the islanders by the governor-general. It was announced in the "Turquie" of the 5th instant that at a Council of Ministers on the previous day it has been decided to abolish the privileges of the islanders as being contrary to the principles of the new régime, but I have no other confirmation of the statement, and pending the receipt of further news from M. Biliotti, I will endeavour to obtain some more authoritative indication of what the Government's real intentions are in the matter.

I have, &c.

CHARLES M. MARLING.

[41730] No. 84.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(*Received November* 15.)

(No. 803.)

Sir, *Constantinople, November* 9, 1909.

WITH reference to my telegram No. 351 of the 5th instant informing you briefly of the proposals outlined by Dr. Gwinner to Sir H. Babington Smith for British participation in the Bagdad Railway, I have the honour to transmit herewith a copy of the memorandum which the latter is sending to Sir Ernest Cassel of the conversation which took place between them.

Mr. Edwin Whittall, the administrator of the National Bank, called on me subsequently and informed me that he had, at Dr. Gwinner's request, arranged the interview between these two gentlemen, and added that, after a long discussion of the situation in which Dr. Gwinner had developed his views as to our participation in considerable detail, Dr. Gwinner had finally requested him to go at once to London to try to induce Sir Ernest Cassel to come to some arrangement with the German company. It is natural that Dr. Gwinner should prefer to approach the National Bank through Mr. Whittall rather than through its official representatives, as Mr. Whittall has not only very large dealings with the German railway company, but has also for some time past been a strong advocate of British participation in the railway; and when he asked me whether in my opinion he should go to London as requested I urged him to do so, provided that Sir H. Babington Smith concurred. Mr. Whittall started for London this morning, travelling viâ Bucharest.

It will at any rate be of advantage that His Majesty's Government should obtain possession of Dr. Gwinner's views, and no one is better qualified to convey them than

Mr. Whittall, who is a personal friend of Dr. Gwinner, and who, moreover, is acting in the matter as a private person.

You will have noted that Dr. Gwinner's proposal to give us control of the Bagdad–Gulf sections is not on all fours with the communication made to me by the Grand Vizier (as reported in my telegram No. 839 of the 11th October), and again repeated by his Highness to me with somewhat more assurance on the 5th instant, that the Germans were prepared to accept our participation on the basis of equal representation on the board. In spite of this discrepancy I have no reason to suppose that Dr. Gwinner did not, as mentioned in Sir H. Babington Smith's memorandum, urge on the Grand Vizier that the Ottoman Government should agree to our acquiring control of the Gulf sections of the line; and I think the explanation probably is that the Grand Vizier, while really anxious to bring the Germans and ourselves together, shrank from making officially a proposal which might be represented as calculated to advance British political interests at a moment like the present, when a certain stir has been made in the press about our supposed designs of aggrandisement at the expense of Turkey in those regions.

I have, &c.
CHARLES M. MARLING.

Inclosure in No. 84.

Memorandum of Sir H. Babington Smith's Conversations with Dr. Gwinner.—(Communicated to Sir E. Cassel by Sir H. Babington Smith.)

DR. GWINNER introduced the subject of British co-operation in the Bagdad Railway.

He traced the history of the previous negotiations on the subject, and said that, while he was confident that the line would be finished in course of time without British co-operation, he believed that with British co-operation it would be completed at an earlier date. He was therefore still desirous to have that co-operation.

He said that he would be prepared now to agree that the section from Bagdad to the Persian Gulf, Koweit, or elsewhere, should be under British control, and should be constructed by British agency and with British material, the other interests only taking a subordinate share. It would be necessary to obtain the assent of the Turks to such an arrangement, but he believed that there would be less difficulty about this under the present than under the old régime.

I asked what relation the British group would have to the rest of the line. He said that the arrangement for that had been made, and that he thought the simplest plan would be to divide the enterprise into two parts at Bagdad. He therefore proposed that the British group should have nothing to do with the line north of Bagdad.

I pointed out that in order to complete the line to Bagdad a very large annual sum would be required as guarantee, and that it appeared to me that it would be a very long time, if not an indefinite time, before the Turks would be able to assume this heavy burden.

Dr. Gwinner said that he looked to the increase in the customs duties to provide the money. He was aware that the British Government had declined to give their assent unless a pledge were given that the revenues should not be applied to the Bagdad Railway. The Germans, on the other hand, desired that they should be so applied.

The Grand Vizier had spoken to him of the dilemma in which they were placed, and he, Dr. Gwinner, had suggested to the Grand Vizier that a solution was to be found in British co-operation on the basis of British control of the Bagdad–Gulf section.

I then pointed out that the type of railway now being constructed was unnecessarily expensive, that if the gauge were reduced and a more economical type of construction adopted the guarantee at present provided for four sections (840 kilom. from Bulgourlou onwards) would suffice to take the railway to Bagdad.

Dr. Gwinner admitted that the type of railway was unnecessarily costly, especially in the Taurus section. He had endeavoured to persuade the Turks under the old régime to accept more economical curves and gradients for this section. They had, however, declined, and he was unwilling to enter upon a new negotiation because it would give hostile interests an opportunity for opposition.

I pointed out that if an agreement were arrived at for co-operation this reason would cease to exist. Dr. Gwinner assented, but, while admitting that economies might be made on the Taurus section, he strongly objected to a change of gauge, and anticipated that the Turks would object on military grounds. He added that England, while glad to have a railway from the Mediterranean to the Persian Gulf, would, he supposed, prefer a change of gauge, which would be an obstacle to the use of the line for military purposes or troops coming from Europe.

He did not give any final answer as to the possibility of a cheaper type of line; and I explained that this suggestion was merely from myself, and that I was not in any way authorised to make or accept proposals of any kind. Dr. Gwinner added that any decision regarding the change of type would have to be taken in six weeks, as he would be beginning actual construction after that.

As regards the finance of the railway, Dr. Gwinner said that, taking into account the reserve of 600,000*l.* kept in hand from the Konia–Bulgourlou section, he expected that they would be about square when they reached El Helif, this reserve and the profit on the three easy sections sufficing to pay for the costly Taurus section.

As regards the remainder of this line from El Helif to Bussorah (about 1,155 kilom.), Dr. Gwinner anticipated a net saving of 2,000*l.* per kilometre, or over 2,250,000*l.* With this sum he proposes to create a reserve fund to meet the loss which there will be on the working when the traffic increases. Under the contract the company undertakes to work all traffic up to 10,000 fr. per kilometre for a fixed sum of 4,500 fr. per kilometre. Traffic receipts above that sum are to be divided in the proportion of 40 per cent. to the company and 60 per cent. to the Government. As the railway cannot work at 40 per cent. or even 45 per cent. of the gross receipts, there will be an increasing loss as the traffic grows, for which it is necessary to provide.

I suggested that the contract might be modified in this respect. If the economy of 2,000*l.* per kilometre became unnecessary for the purpose of creating a reserve fund, this, with the adoption of a cheaper type of line, would permit of a very large reduction in the guarantee, which would no doubt serve as an inducement to the Government to modify the division of the receipts.

I mentioned Sir William Willcocks's proposal for a railway from Homs to Bagdad. Dr. Gwinner spoke with some contempt of this scheme, and said that in his opinion it was impracticable without a guarantee. Even if it paid ultimately, it would not pay for a number of years. I thought it well to say that this scheme had not been devised or put forward in any way as a means of opposing the Bagdad Railway. It was proposed by Sir William Willcocks entirely on his own initiative and without any political object whatever.

H. BABINGTON SMITH.

[41732] No. 85.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 15.)

(No. 895.)

Sir, *Constantinople, November 9, 1909.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 200 of the 23rd March last on the subject of the return of certain Roman Catholic converts in the district of Mosul to their ancient Nestorian Church, I have the honour to transmit herewith copy of a further despatch which I have received from His Majesty's consul at Mosul, reporting on the difficulties which these converts are meeting with at the hands of the local Turkish authorities.

This despatch furnishes the report on the present situation as requested by you in your despatch No. 344 of the 3rd instant; but I have this morning received a telegram from Mr. Wilkie Young stating that the Nestorian community have again appealed to him for protection, and that he has advised them as Ottoman subjects to submit their complaints to their own authorities, and they are accordingly awaiting the arrival of the new governor-general to-morrow in order to lay their case before him.

Mr. Wilkie Young adds that, as long as their names remain on the register of the Chaldean Roman Catholics, they are in the power of the Chaldean priests, who are bullying them in various ways; and he suggests that the moment has now come for the central authorities to show whether they really mean to act impartially in

the matter by sending instructions to the local authorities to deal fairly with these people.

It is difficult at the present moment, in the very sensitive condition of Turkish feeling with regard to external advice or interference, to approach the Turkish Government here in this matter, which is, after all, one of purely internal concern; but I am writing to Mr. Wilkie Young approving the line of action which he has so far adopted, and instructing him to use his influence in a tactful and generally conciliatory way to endeavour to secure fair treatment for the converts at the hands of the local authorities.

I have, &c.
CHARLES M. MARLING.

Inclosure 1 in No. 85.

Consul Wilkie Young to Mr. Marling.

(No. 18.)

Mosul, October 15, 1909.

Sir,

IN a despatch No. 8 of the 13th February last, I had the honour to report to your Excellency that a number of Chaldean Roman Catholic families belonging to the village of Elkosh had thrown off their allegiance to Rome, and had reverted to their ancient (the Nestorian) Church; that they had sent a priest of their own choosing to Mar Shimun to be consecrated bishop, and that they had appealed to the friendly offices of the British Government for protection against the persecution of the Chaldean priests, who were endeavouring by intrigues to prejudice their case with the local authorities.

Subsequently to the incidents reported in the despatch referred to nothing more was heard here of the movement until about two months ago, when it suddenly assumed considerable proportions. The following is a summary of what occurred.

A number of Elkosh villagers, headed by two priests, came to Mosul and presented a petition to the then vali (extract enclosed), begging to be registered as a separate community with their newly consecrated bishop, Mar Elia, as their head. Thereupon it seems that Bishop Stephan (the acting Roman Catholic Chaldean Patriarch) went to the vali and told him that the petition was a bogus one, and that most of the seals upon it had been either forged, stolen, or taken by force or fraud from their owners. When this news reached Elkosh, sixty out of the seventy petitioners came to Mosul (nine hours) in order to testify in person to the genuineness of their seals. There seems to have been some excitement; and while the petitioners were waiting at the konak to be received the acting French vice-consul arrived and had an interview with the vali. This occurred on two distinct occasions, and it was assumed that the French official was using his influence to prevent the vali from granting the petition. The villagers then appealed to the British vice-consulate. Mr. Nimrod Rassam, who was in charge, seems to have maintained a cautious attitude and to have confined himself to receiving some of them, whom he advised to be patient and trust in the fairness of the Turkish Government.

At this juncture Bishop Stephan called upon Mr. Rassam (who is a Roman Catholic) and insolently warned him not to countenance the movement, somewhat incautiously adding, Mr. Rassam reports, that "he" (Bishop Stephan) "was determined to repress the movement at all costs, and that he would spend the last drop of his blood [*sic*] and the last piastre in the Patriarchate treasury in the endeavour."

The petitioners subsequently addressed a telegram to the Ministry of the Interior (translation enclosed); but up to date the local authorities insist on retaining their names in the list of the community they have left.

In the present chaotic state of affairs here—the vali is still away, and there appears to be no responsible official representing him—there is nothing to be done by unofficial and purely local intervention. I have, however, been endeavouring to ascertain quietly the grounds upon which the local authorities, and particularly the ex-vali, have until now evaded the apparently just demand of the Elkosh villagers. The pretext given appears to be that "Ottoman" subjects are to be divided simply into three categories, viz., Moslems, Christians, and Jews, and that no further distinction is to be made between the various denominations of Christians; consequently that there is no occasion for an alteration to be made in the register in the present case."

This is obviously a subterfuge. If the statement were correct, it would involve a great change in the machinery of the Ottoman Government in dealing with all its Christian subjects, and a fresh register of Christians would have to be made, in which

all would be inscribed indiscriminately under one and the same heading. Nothing, however, is known of such a change here, and at the present moment no less than six Christian communities with their religious heads are officially recognised, and separate pages are assigned to each in the "deftar" (or register) of the district. Such being the case, the right of the Nestorians to similar treatment seems to be indisputable. Even if the alleged change had come into force, it would be illogical and unfair to retain the names of the Nestorians under the heading of Chaldean Catholics, such retention amounting in fact to keeping them in subjection to an authority which they have formally repudiated.

From the foregoing it is clear that the local authorities have again been taking sides in this purely sectarian dispute, and it is hardly to be wondered at that they are generally credited here with having been "bought" by the Patriarchate, as so often happened under the "old order."

As regards the alleged intervention of the acting French vice-consul in these intrigues, in conversation with me yesterday admitted having "interested himself in the matter," adding by way of explanation that he "was bound to support the Catholics," that "the movement was a fictitious one, and had only been joined by seven or eight [*sic*] individuals," and that "neither the Nestorian Church nor Mar Shimun as a religious head are recognised by the Ottoman Government," and more in the same vein. I gather, however, from the inaccuracy of his information, as well as from the manner in which he is dealing with the local authorities, that his action is rather the result of some overwhelming personal influence exercised by the Papal delegate and the Dominican Fathers than of instructions from his embassy. It seems at least highly improbable in these days that the French Government, if properly informed of the facts, could allow its influence to be used officially in such a case as the present—in plain words, in direct opposition to article 11 of the constitution.

The struggle between the followers of Mar Shimun and the Chaldean Patriarch is of ancient date, and is in fact neither more nor less than the resistance offered by the remnant of the oldest of the Eastern Churches to the proselytising efforts of the West. Without criticism or disrespect, it may be observed that, as a general principle, the French mission in this district appears to allow considerable latitude to its converts during the first years of its ascendancy, and only by degrees to tighten its hold and enforce stricter conformity with its tenets. Thus it seems that all that was at first required of the Elkosh people, on becoming Roman Catholics some years ago, was acknowledgment of the Papal supremacy, sanction being given to almost all their ancient ritual and practices, even to the marriage of their (native) clergy. This last is a point to which great importance is attached, there being a traditional and seemingly reasoned objection in this part of the world to the presence of unmarried priests in the villages. It would seem that the attitude of the French missionaries with regard to this and other points, and the gradual tightening of their control in various directions (exercised largely through the Patriarch Emanuel and his satellites), have precipitated this return to the fold of the ancient Nestorian Church.

The writer has more than once had occasion to refer to the remarkable educational work of the Dominican fathers in this district, but a desire to do justice to it and them can only increase one's regret that they are so unfortunate in their tools. Chief of these, the present Chaldean Patriarch (Emanuel) is an unscrupulous native adventurer of dubious origin, who in his efforts to harry and coerce the Nestorians, has even stooped to ally himself with the infamous Kurd, Reshid Beg; and there is reason to fear that a prelate with such a record will stop short of nothing in order to discredit his rival (Mar Shimun), and repress a movement so dangerous to his own interest.

Your Excellency will believe that I have not encouraged this movement, which I was indeed at first disposed to regard as inopportune, and at the best of rather doubtful expediency. It is, however, a perfectly lawful movement, and I think, an honest and spontaneous one; and though I have not hitherto been in a position to give more than a vague acknowledgment to the appeals which are persistently addressed to this vice-consulate, I cannot help hoping that the Ottoman Government may be persuaded to accede without undue delay to the reasonable demands of these poor people. In doing so, it will afford a much needed proof of the reality of the constitution and the genuineness of its reforms.

I have, &c.
H. WILKIE YOUNG.

Inclosure 2 in No. 85.

Extract from Petition of Elkosh Villagers to Vali of Mosul.

AS the old order has passed away and the Government has proclaimed personal and religious freedom, this must be acted upon; nor must it any longer be possible to oppose such movements as this of ours with intrigues. Accordingly, as our ancient faith was that of the Nestorian Chaldeans, so we crave permission, in accordance with the provisions of the constitution, to register ourselves afresh by the name of Nestorian Chaldeans, and, further, we beg you to recognise our spiritual chief, the Bishop Mar Elia, who has been elected by us and confirmed by the Patriarch Mar Shimun.

(Here follow seventy seals.)

Inclosure 3 in No. 85.

Petitioners of Elkosh to Minister of Interior, Constantinople.

(Translation.)
(Telegraphic.)

August 21, 1909.

BEING by origin Nestorians, we were compelled under the old régime to become Chaldean Catholics. Under the new régime we have returned to our old community. We have tried in vain to prevail upon the local government to separate our names and those of our families from those of the Chaldean community. We find ourselves, consequently, under the necessity of submitting the matter to you and praying you to give definite instructions to those whom it may concern to listen to us.

(Signed in the name of fifty families of Elkosh.)

Inclosure 4 in No. 85.

List of Christian Communities in the Vilayet of Mosul.

CHALDEAN Roman Catholics in city of Mosul, 750 households.
Syrian Roman Catholics, 700 households.
Jacobites, or old Syrians, 750 households.
Armonian Gregorians, 40 households.
Protestants, 14 households.
Greek Orthodox, 8 households.
Nestorians, number at present unknown.

Note.—The first six of the above-mentioned communities are all officially recognised by the local authorities, and their members registered separately under the respective heading of each in the Government dettar. Moreover, official communications are addressed to them through their respective spiritual heads. Nestorian communities have long existed and are actually recognised in other parts of the vilayet, but until lately there have not been any in the city of Mosul and surrounding villages. (Elkosh, &c.). Within the last six months, upwards of fifty households have formally declared themselves to the Government as Nestorians and claim to be recognised and registered as such. Up to date the local authorities have declined to open a register for them; consequently their numbers are uncertain. But it will be observed that even if there were no more than seventy, *i.e.*, those who signed the petition, their numbers are still in excess of those of the Armenian, Protestant, and Greek communities combined.

For further particulars of the population, *vide* No. 4 of the 28th January, 1909.

[41736] No. 86.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(*Received November* 15.)

(No. 809.)

Sir, *Constantinople, November* 10, 1909.

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith a despatch from His Majesty's consul at Aleppo, reporting on the general situation in his district.

I have, &c.
CHARLES M. MARLING.

Inclosure in No. 86.

Consul Fontana to Sir G. Lowther.

(No. 28.)

Sir, *Aleppo, October* 25, 1909.

I HAVE the honour to submit the following short report upon the general situation in this district, setting forth the chief events of the past two months:—

Since the date of my despatch No. 13 of the 27th May last relations between Christians and Moslems in this town and neighbourhood have greatly improved. About two months ago an officer made a speech in the public square at Aleppo, dwelling upon the enormities of the reign of the ex-Sultan, and calling upon the Mussulmans to consider and treat as brothers their Christian fellow-subjects. And the mullahs and sheikhs have admonished their people to live at peace with the Christians.

Reshid Bey, the governor-general of this vilayet, has been dismissed, although the reason for his dismissal is not generally known here. His successor, General Fakhri Pasha, arrived at Aleppo and took over charge of the vilayet about a fortnight ago. Fakhri Pasha was commandant at Serres, and was afterwards promoted to be Governor-General of Monastir. Previous to that appointment he fell into disgrace with the Palace whilst Governor of Bussorah, and passed a year in privacy and practical exile at Aleppo, where he is said to have family connections. And he was degraded from the rank of general of division to that of general of brigade. Since his arrival the new vali has been working well and assiduously, and he has created a good impression here. Owing to the depression in trade, scarcity of employment, and consequent increase of poverty, robbery and burglary have latterly become common in this town. Fakhri Pasha has dealt severely with such cases, each offender receiving so many strokes with a rod according to the gravity of the offence. Summary justice has produced excellent results, and public security has already increased.

One of the most important questions now engaging the attention of the vali is the reorganisation of the gendarme force in this province. According to the new regulations, no man above the age of 26 years can be enrolled as a private. Every candidate must be of certain stature and proportion; he must be able to read and write, and to show that neither he nor any of his near relatives have been sentenced to imprisonment by the correctional or criminal courts. The latter conditions exclude many candidates otherwise eligible, and insufficient funds must delay the increase in the number of gendarmes prescribed under the reorganisation scheme. Major Nye, one of the British officers engaged in the reorganisation of the gendarme force in Macedonia, has been commissioned for service at Aleppo, where he has already taken up his duties. He has been well received by the vali and by the military officers here, some of whom express a desire to quit the army for the constabulary. About 200 officers, most of them elderly, have been pensioned off on half pay in this district.

The enrolment of Christians for military service is proceeding, and is causing an exodus of young men from this region. The number of persons who have emigrated from Aleppo to America this summer is estimated at from 5,000 to 8,000, or about one-sixth of the entire Christian population of the town. The emigrants are mostly of the poorer classes, though many of the wealthier families have also gone and settled abroad. The Christians dread service in Turkish regiments, where they will be a scattered few among a great majority of Moslem troops. Were the formation of separate companies or battalions of Christians contemplated, the Christian aversion to military service would be far less marked, but at present that aversion amounts almost to loathing. A Turkish officer here has expressed to me his opinion that the scheme of obligatory service for the Christians is likely to prove a failure. It would seem premature, in view of the recent massacres in the Adana vilayet and in the Antioch region, and the extreme fear under which the Christians of Aleppo, Marash

Aintab, Alexandretta, and other towns were labouring but a few months back, to enforce, at the present time, Christian military service in these provinces. Were public security thoroughly established, and had sufficient time elapsed to efface, in some measure, the memory of those events, such service would doubtless appear less intolerable to the native Christian. The death of M. Rocferrier, the distinguished French consul at Aleppo, which occurred last August, caused wide-felt regret in this town. After the disturbances in the spring, M. Rocferrier made a tour through the devastated districts of the Adana vilayet and brought succour to hundreds of people in dire need. His successor, M. Laronce, was for some years French consul at Muscat.

As far as I can judge, the general feeling among Turkish officers, officials, and notables in this locality is far from optimistic as regards the future of the constitutional régime. Improvement in the administration is very slow, venality continues, there is no real co-operation or cohesion among the Turks themselves, and, amid incessant talk, perseverance in action is rare. Small personal interests seem ever to eclipse interest in the public good, and, whilst all are ready to criticise, very few understand that to criticise is to judge, but not necessarily to condemn. No confidence is placed in the ability or integrity of the six deputies from this vilayet, all of whom are Moslems. Several Christians were proposed for election, but they intrigued so fiercely against each other that no supporters were left to either.

I have, &c.
RAPHAEL A. FONTANA.

[42198] No. 87.

Mr. R. L. Harmsworth to Sir C. Hardinge.—(Received November 17.)

Caxton House, Westminster, November 16, 1909.

Dear Sir,

I SHOULD have written before this in accordance with my promise, but I have been called into the country.

In the course of our last interview you very kindly enquired as to the extent of my association with oil enterprises. I may say that my business for several years past has comprised very little else.

In the early part of 1906 I joined Sir George Newnes, Bart., M.P., Lord Joicey, the late Sir William Avery, and various other gentlemen in privately subscribing 500,000*l.* to exploit the great oil fields of New South Wales, my own contribution to this sum exceeding 100,000*l.* This venture was registered under the name of the Commonwealth Oil Corporation (Limited). It has for several years past been engaged in building a railway and erecting enormous distilling and refining plants at Wolgan and Torbaine in New South Wales. This enterprise forms the only native oil undertaking in Australia, and in a few months' time should begin to produce oil in quantities sufficient to supply the Australian demand.

I was also with some of these gentlemen responsible for the dispatch of a geological expedition to New Caledonia to examine the evidence of oil in that French colony, without, however, satisfactory results ensuing.

Acting upon the report of Mr. D. A. Sutherland, F.I.C., I commenced boring operations for oil early in 1908 in Egypt, at Jemsah on the Red Sea. At the present time two wells have been sunk to reach the oil-bearing strata, and have proved to be gushers, which at the present time are producing fully 500 tons of oil a-day.

The financing of the Egyptian Oil Trust, the company formed to exploit this undoubtedly great oil field, was borne almost entirely by myself. Situated as this field is upon the shores of the Red Sea, it is in an unique position to reach markets.

In applying for the concession to work the reputed oil deposits in Mesopotamia, my intention is to pursue the same course as I have adopted in Egypt. On receipt of the concession, I should in the first place, despatch an expedition consisting of geologists and oil experts to report upon the conditions in the various spots where oil is reputed to exist. Should the report prove to be favourable, I should despatch a boring expedition to prove or disprove the anticipations of the experts. In this work I should have as my partner, and be associated with Mr. D. A. Sutherland, F.I.C., of 26, Victoria Street, S.W., under whose advice I have acted in all my various oil enterprises.

I very much regret that Mr. D'Arcy did not respond favourably to the suggestion I made, at the instigation of the Foreign Office, that we should co-operate in the effort to secure this concession. I informed Mr. D'Arcy that I was quite willing to recognise that his past efforts to secure this concession and the considerable expense he had been

put to thereby, should be taken into consideration by us, in the event of our joint effort resulting in the securing of the concession.

In any case, however, should Mr. D'Arcy finally and definitely refuse co-operation, I propose to pursue this matter to the utmost of my ability and resources, in which I trust to have the support of the Foreign Office.

I am, &c.
R. L. HARMSWORTH.

[42411] No. 88.

The Euxine and Marmora British Development Syndicate to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 19.)

Finsbury Pavement House, London, November 18, 1909.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour, under instructions of the board of this syndicate, to lay the following facts before your Excellency for the favour of your kind consideration.

Your Excellency has already been approached on behalf of my board, with a view to your authorising His Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople to support the efforts which the representative of my syndicate is making in that city to secure the concession for the construction of the Samsun-Sivas Railway and its natural extensions, and we are still waiting your Excellency's decision as to this request.

I have the honour now to inform you that last week a deputation of five gentlemen, representing French and Russian interests, came, *proprio motu*, to London from Paris, with the express purpose of forming a combination with my syndicate, in order to obtain concessions for public works in Turkey, and to do away with the useless competition of conflicting interests, which at present is militating largely against such concessions being granted to anyone.

The principal of the French group is M. Perchot, a millionaire contractor (the constructor of the "Metropolitan"), who has carried through affairs of the greatest magnitude in France, and who has proved to us that he is fully assured of the active support of the French Government, of the French Embassy at Constantinople, and of one of the most influential financial groups in Paris.

The representative of the Russian group, who is closely associated with M. Perchot, is Rossolato Bey, who informs us that he had been personally assured by the Russian Ambassador at Constantinople of his intention to support any group which had the support of the French Embassy, and that he was aware from official information that, owing to circumstances arising out of the action of the Turkish Government in according the Bagdad Railway to Germany, the concession for the Samsun-Sivas Railway and all railways to the north would not be granted to anyone whomsoever, save with the entire concurrence, if not initiative, of the Russian Government, and on terms more favourable to the Turkish Government than those given in the Bagdad Railway concession.

These gentlemen said that they were very anxious to be allied with an English group, so that the subjects of the three Powers should be found working in accord and not in opposition, and proposals were made and accepted by my directors, providing for the combined action of the three interests and for the formation of a syndicate representing the three interests, on terms which were considered entirely satisfactory to this syndicate, as fair and practicable. An agreement to this effect was accordingly entered into, and a representative agency, or "bureau d'études," will shortly be opened at Constantinople, with a resident representative from each of the three groups, as forming the local board, who will act under the instructions of the parent board sitting either in Paris or London.

A discussion arose as to the name which should be given to this agency—whether it should be merely called the international agency or the Anglo-Franco-Russian agency. The opinion of the Frenchmen and the Russians was wholly in favour of the latter proposal, and they said that they would have no difficulty in securing from their Governments the necessary consent to the adoption of this name, and they would at once write to their representative Foreign Offices with that object.

Though my board is aware that your Excellency cannot give any direct authorisation in such a matter, I am directed to request that, should you see fit, you will kindly state whether there would be any objection to the adoption of this name as far as the English group is concerned. The board is unwilling to take any step which,

even in so small a matter, might possibly run counter to the views of His Majesty's Government.

I am also to beg that, in view of the fact that the arrangement now come to is calculated largely to minimise the conflict of interests which has hitherto existed between the subjects of the three named Powers, you will authorise His Majesty's Ambassador in Constantinople to support the action of this combined agency in Constantinople in harmony with the guaranteed action of the French and Russian Embassies.

I have, &c.
F. J. ASBURY, *Secretary.*

[42586] No. 89.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 22.)

(No. 902.)
Sir, *Constantinople, November 13, 1909.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 895 of the 9th instant, I have the honour to transmit a copy of a despatch which I have received from His Majesty's vice-consul at Mosul, giving full details of the case put forward by the Nestorians referred to in the above despatch, and the reply given them by the local authorities.

I have, &c.
CHARLES M. MARLING.

Inclosure 1 in No. 89.

Vice-Consul Young to Mr. Marling.

(No. 22.)
Sir, *Mosul, October 22, 1909.*

REFERRING to the despatches Nos. 8 and 18 which I had the honour to submit to your Excellency on the 13th February and the 15th October respectively, I beg leave to report as follows:—

It appears that the Nestorians, having submitted another petition to the local authorities, attended yesterday at the konak to receive their reply. Of the deputation of five who attended, only one, the Priest Hanna, was permitted to enter, the others being turned away. I am informed that the following is exactly what occurred. The acting vali and the administrative council were assembled. The acting governor appears to have taken no part in the discussion, which was almost entirely between Sabonji Pasha and the Nestorian priest:—

Sabonji.—What is your business?

The priest replied briefly stating his case, demanding recognition for his community and free access for the bishop.

Sabonji.—An order has come from Constantinople to the effect that in future the Government will recognise Christians simply as such and without distinction of sects.

Priest.—That may be true; but, all the same, each Christian community has its register and its head, and we claim a right to a spiritual head of our own.

Cadi.—We wish to help you, but we cannot take the responsibility.

A Member of the Council.—I understand that these people wish to have their names registered in a register of their own, simply for convenience' sake in administrative matters.

Priest.—Yes; precisely.

Sabonji.—You ask for a bishop of your own, but the Government does not recognise the Nestorian religion or Mar Shimun, your patriarch; how will it recognise you and your bishop?

Cadi.—Go, my children, and say your prayers. We recognise your right to call yourselves Nestorian Chaldeans, and if anyone persecutes you I will see that they are punished. When your bishop receives a firman from Constantinople we will also recognise him; but at present he must not come.

Sabonji.—An order has come from the Minister of Justice that this man, your bishop, being an intrigner ("mufsid"), is not to be permitted to come to Mosul.

Priest.—Then he is an exile?

Sabonji.—Yes.

This was the end of the audience, which, it will be observed, was conducted mostly by Sabonji, the cadi, who is a feeble but good old man, confining himself to benevolent platitudes.

So far as the local authorities are concerned, it will be seen from the above that the Nestorians have failed. They have been definitely refused registration—a privilege which is common to every Christian community in the country—and their bishop is being detained administratively at Julamerk on a vague charge of being an "intrigner," made against him at Constantinople by the Chaldean Patriarch. They are further gratuitously insulted before the administrative council of the vilayet by one of its members (Sabonji Pasha), who, speaking apparently on behalf of the Government, tells their priest that "it does not recognise their religion or their Patriarch, how much less themselves!" It may be doubted whether in the worst days of the old order tyranny was more open and unashamed.

These people continue to appeal to the friendly offices of the vice-consulate to help them with the Government. I have three times brought the matter unofficially to the attention of the acting vali. On the last occasion, the 18th instant, he promised to give it his careful consideration, but added somewhat naively that he had only one vote on the council and that in these matters "they all looked to Sabonji Pasha for advice, he having such long experience of local affairs" (*vide* No. 21 of the 21st October).

In response to the latest appeal of these villagers, made in consequence of their failure yesterday before the administrative council, I could only advise them to be patient and trust in the fairness of the Government at Constantinople. I have given this advice several times before, and I very anxiously hope that it may be justified by the event. But I must regretfully add that until now this vilayet has seen nothing of the justice and equality and freedom which are rightly expected from the constitution.

I have, &c.
H. WILKIE YOUNG.

P.S. *October 23.*—I enclose the translation of a petition which, I understand, has been sent to-day to the Grand Vizier by the Nestorians of Elkosh.

H. W. Y.

Inclosure 2 in No. 89.

Petition addressed to Grand Vizier by Nestorians of Elkosh.

(Translation.)

WE, the undersigned, were originally Nestorians, but under the violence and oppression of the old régime found ourselves under the necessity of joining the community of the Chaldean Catholics. When the Government proclaimed religious liberty we returned to our old Nestorian community under the authority of Mar Shimun.

We have chosen the priest George for our bishop, and he has been approved by Mar Shimun, and has taken the name of Mar Elia.

We desire that our names should be separated from the Chaldean Catholics, and that a new register should be opened for us, and to that effect we have presented three successive petitions to the vilayet, which have been refused.

It has been urged that our bishop, Mar Elia, is an intrigner, but it is known to all that he is a good and pious man; but he has been called an intrigner because he has repudiated the authority of the Chaldean Patriarch Emmanuel and the supremacy of the Pope, whereas if he had continued to follow them he would have received from them a great reward.

We would call attention to the fact that there are actually six different Christian communities here, and each has a register of its own, and we venture to ask why a special register should not be opened for us also, who are sixty households in one village? Is this really forbidden to us? and is this the promised religious freedom?

The local authorities here are taking the part of the Chaldean Patriarch Emmanuel,

who, under the protection of the Pope, does things which are notoriously illegal, and with fixed intention they force us to follow him.

We are Ottoman subjects, and wish to serve our country, but we decline to accept the supremacy of a foreign Pope, and in this we beg you to help us.

The local authorities declare that, according to an order from the Ministry of Justice, the return of Bishop Elia to Mosul is forbidden. If there is such an order it is incompatible with justice.

We therefore beg you kindly to give instructions that the latter may be allowed to return without delay and be recognised as our spiritual head in accordance with justice and equity.

Priest HANNA.
„ YUSEF.
„ ZACHARIA.
Deacon MATTI.

October 10 (23), 1325 (1909)

[42587] No. 90.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 22.)

(No. 903.)

Sir, *Constantinople, November* 14, 1909.

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith two despatches from the acting British consul and His Majesty's consul at Jeddah, respecting the insecurity of the pilgrimage routes in the Hejaz. The first of these despatches reports two attacks on caravans by Bedouins of the Harb tribe, while the second reports the subsequent submission of that tribe.

I have, &c.
CHARLES M. MARLING.

Inclosure 1 in No. 90.

Acting Consul Richardson to Sir G. Lowther.

(No. 56.)

Sir, *Jeddah, October* 6, 1909.

I HAVE the honour to furnish your Excellency with the following details of two attacks committed by Bedouins on the 2nd and 3rd instant respectively on a pilgrim caravan on the Jeddah–Mecca road.

The above-mentioned caravan, consisting of about 3,000 camels, by which some 1,500 to 2,000 Javanese and Indian pilgrims were proceeding to Mecca and a quantity of merchandise being transported, started from the Mecca gate of this town early on Saturday morning, the 2nd instant.

At about 10 o'clock the same morning when the caravan was only 5 miles distant from Jeddah, it was fired on at a place called Wataya*.

It would appear that about 400 Bedouins belonging to the tribe called the Harb were lying in ambush for the caravan outside the town, of whose movements they had received full information from spies sent into Jeddah a few days previously.

The Bedouins had dug pits at a distance of some 100 or 150 yards from the usual caravan track, in which about 200 of their number were concealed. These opened fire on the camels (most probably with no intention to kill), while others rushed and took possession of the animals laden with merchandise, or commenced looting the effects of pilgrims.

The attack caused great confusion amongst the pilgrims, and a panic ensued. Most of the pilgrims dismounted and fled in different directions, abandoning their camels and belongings.

Some of the Bedouins then took to divesting pilgrims of the money they had on their persons, and in this they were assisted by the camel drivers, who were without doubt in league with the robbers.

The caravan, it might be mentioned, had an escort of sixty Turkish soldiers and askarines, and forty Shereefian soldiers (bishas), and certain other Bedouin friendlies detailed by the Grand Shereef, who, on hearing the fire, returned same.

According to the accounts of pilgrims who returned here, it was remarkable that

while the fusillade lasted for more than an hour, there were no casualties on either side, nor were any pilgrims hurt.

Both sides, as if by pre-arrangement, were firing over each other's heads.

The firing was distinctly audible in Jeddah, where the garrison was turned out and dispatched against the highwaymen, accompanied by the kaimakam and the local commandant.

Within two hours the robbers were put to flight, after losing a few men killed. Two prisoners were taken and brought into town with the head of a Bedouin that was killed in the fighting. The latter was exhibited at the Mecca gate of the town.

The main caravan, or such part of it as could be got together after the attack, diverted its course to a place called Nezleh that is about an hour's journey from this city, whence some 500 pilgrims (350 Javanese and 150 Indians) tramped back into Jeddah, the rest of the caravan continuing its journey Meccawards.

The night was passed at a place called Kahwat-el-Abd, and the next morning (3rd October) the caravan reached Bahra, where a short stay was made. It had hardly left the latter place when it was attacked a second time by a force of about 600 Bedouins belonging to the same Harb tribes. The caravan was obliged to return to Bahra immediately, after losing some 300 camels. Troops from the outposts in the vicinity came to the rescue and succeeded in recapturing all except fifty camels from the raiders. In the fighting that took place nine Bedouins were killed, the casualties on the Turkish side being very slight.

The caravan was then delayed at Bahra till the arrival from Mecca of 300 Turkish soldiers and one Hotchkiss gun to strengthen its escort.

The journey was resumed early on the fifth morning, and news by telegraph received here last night announced its safe arrival at Mecca.

I am afraid that a good part of the pilgrims' baggage that was lying strewn on the roadside after the first attack has been stolen by Arabs from the neighbouring villages, if not by the camel drivers themselves, to say nothing of what was taken by the Bedouins after each of the attacks on the caravan. A very small portion of the pilgrims' baggage has since been brought into Jeddah.

The 350 Javanese and 150 Indian pilgrims that returned here after the incident of the 2nd instant are still wandering about the town penniless and baggageless.

I telegraphed to the governor-general bringing the circumstances of these two daring attacks on the pilgrims to notice, and drawing his Excellency's particular attention to the daily increasing insecure state of the pilgrim routes between this and Mecca.

I have demanded that prompt and energetic measures be adopted for the adequate protection of pilgrims bound for Mecca in the future, and that steps be taken at the same time to restore the belongings of pilgrims looted and the goods of British Indian merchants robbed by the Bedouins.

I have thought fit to mention in my note that this consulate reserves to itself the right to claim compensation hereafter for all losses suffered by British subjects in consequence of the two Bedouin attacks on the caravan under report.

Perhaps it would not be out of place to mention here that the numerous outstanding claims for robberies committed on British Indian pilgrims and merchants, reported in Mr. Monahan's despatch No. 10 of the 6th March, 1909, still remain unsettled, in spite of the instructions conveyed by the Ministry of the Interior to the governor-general of this province, referred to in your Excellency's telegram of the 5th April last.

I have been pressing for a settlement of these claims since my arrival in Jeddah, but have failed to elicit even so much as a reply from the vali at Taïf.

For some time past the Jeddah–Mecca road has been reported to be unsafe for both pilgrims and merchandise. On the night of the 8th September last a big Javanese caravan was held up by Bedouins near Bahra and about eighty camels taken. These, that contained the baggage of pilgrims, I am informed the local Dutch consul has not succeeded as yet in causing the authorities to recover and restore.

There have been rumours current recently, and almost daily, that Bedouins were collecting in great numbers in the vicinity and contemplated an attack on this town. These have caused the Jeddah authorities much uneasiness, compelling them to bestir themselves a little, and strong patrols have been kept in readiness nightly at each of the gates leading into this town.

It would appear that the sheikh of the Javanese pilgrims here was apprised of the projected attack on the caravan that started from here on the 2nd instant, and that he, in company with the Dutch consul, visited the kaimakam the day previous and

entreated him not to permit the caravan to leave owing to the unsafe condition of the road.

The latter expressed his inability to interfere in the movements of the caravan, as information had been received from the agent of the Grand Shereef at Mecca declaring the route safe.

Certain sources attribute the recent attacks on the pilgrim caravan to discord existing between the vali and the Grand Shereef. In this connection it might be said that it was extremely unlikely that the latter was totally ignorant of the massing of Bedouins on the Jeddah–Mecca road or of the preparations made by the robbers prior to the incident of the 2nd at Watayah.

My French and Dutch colleagues called at the consulate and proposed that a collective note be addressed by the consular corps to the governor-general, demanding serious measures on the part of the vilayet and Grand Shereefate to ensure the safety of the pilgrim route, and pointing out the culpable negligence of the Jeddah authorities in permitting the caravan to start when it must have been aware that danger existed on the road.

I expressed my willingness to sign the proposed communication.

Since the beginning of the Arabic month of Rejab (*i.e.*, since about the 17th July), six vessels have arrived at Jeddah from Singapore with 5,295 Malay pilgrims; fifteen ships from ports in the Dutch East Indies with 8,165 Javanese pilgrims, and three vessels from Bombay with 2,440 Indians. In addition to the above, about 500 other pilgrims from the north have arrived in Russian and Khedivial steamers.

The present outlook for the pilgrimage in the Hedjaz is somewhat dismal—the Mecca-Medina and the Jeddah–Medina roads being practically closed, and the Jeddah-Mecca tract far from being rendered safe by the authorities.

In view of the fact that the bulk of Indian pilgrims estimated at between 20,000 and 25,000 will arrive during the two months following the Ramadan, I would humbly venture to suggest that your Excellency will have the goodness to make representations at the Sublime Porte on the existing unsettled state of the Hedjaz, and cause it to send out troops to this province to restore order, and to establish the security of the pilgrim and trade routes in the interior.

With the greatest respect, I have, &c.

G. A. RICHARDSON.

Inclosure 2 in No. 90.

Consul Monahan to Sir G. Lowther.

(No. 59.)

Jeddah, November 2, 1909.

Sir,

WITH reference to Acting Consul Dr. Richardson's despatch No. 56 of the 6th October, 1909, I have the honour to report what follows.

Three caravans of the usual size, that is, from 2,000 to 3,000 camels, carrying pilgrims, pilgrims' baggage, and merchandise of Jeddah merchants, went without incident, strongly escorted, from Jeddah to Mecca, between the 3rd October and 28th October (both exclusive).

Towards the end of October there were alarming rumours of Harb Bedouins approaching to attack caravans on the Jeddah–Mecca road. The two sons of the Grand Shereef, who had both accompanied two of the above-mentioned three caravans, came to Jeddah, and on the morning of the 28th ultimo, started hence with another great caravan, which was guarded by an unusually strong escort. Near Jeddah on the same morning they met on the road one Ibn Asimi, the most important of the Harb sheikhs, who tendered his submission. However, on the same day, about 15 miles from Jeddah, about 150 of the Harb Bedouins were waiting ambushed in the hills near a place called Jerada; but before the caravan reached the spot, these Bedouins were surrounded by regular soldiers; Shereefian gendarmes and friendly Bedouins lost ten or twelve killed, many wounded, and two prisoners, and were dispersed, while on the side of the Government there was only one casualty, a friendly Bedouin wounded. The caravan arrived safely at Mecca.

The Jeddah–Mecca road is now supposed to be safe, and other caravans will soon start, as the Harb tribe are supposed to have nearly all now submitted to the Government, or rather to the Grand Shereef representing the Government. Several small caravans have got through safely from Yembo to Medina, which road is also

supposed to be safe, but no caravan is yet venturing on the long land routes from Mecca to Medina, or from Jeddah to Medina.

A week ago three dhows were seized by Harb pirates on the coast between Jeddah and Rabigh, a port to the south of Yembo, but they have since been returned with their whole cargoes to their owners, so that the submission of the Harb tribe, or at least the greater part of it, seems real.

I have, &c.

J. H. MONAHAN.

[42594] No. 91.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(*Received November* 22.)

(No. 910.)

Sir, *Constantinople, November* 16, 1909.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 877, of the 27th October last, I have the honour to report that the question of the Adana compensation claims has entered on a new phase in the endeavour recently made by the Ottoman Government to compel the insurance companies to pay such compensation to the sufferers from the events of last spring.

It appears that on the first refusal of the insurance companies to indemnify the Armenian inhabitants of the quarter of the town which had been burnt down during the troubles, the Armenian Patriarch took up their cause, and, after failing to elicit anything from them by an appeal to the precedents of Californian and Messina disasters, brought the matter into the Law Courts. At this point the Government, who had been forced to rebuild the burnt quarter out of Treasury funds, intervened on the Patriarch's behalf, and Haladjian Effendi, the Minister of Public Works, addressed a categorical injunction to all the insurance companies concerned to pay the compensation demanded. The effect of this step has been the contrary of what was expected; for I learn from Sir Edwin Pears, who represents the most important English companies here and who had recommended that some form of *ex gratia* compensation should be given to the sufferers at Adana, that his clients, who were at first disposed to follow this advice, had now decided to make no payment, and to fight the question out to the end.

As regards the right of compensation from the Ottoman Government, I have the honour to enclose copy of a letter from Sir Edwin, in which he urges very strongly that the Ottoman Government should be compelled to consider the claims presented by the foreign missions on behalf of their subjects who suffered losses at Adana; he mentions the disguised compensation made in this country at the time of the massacres of 1895–96, and cites also several former cases in which the Egyptian, French, and other Governments paid compensation for damages sustained by foreign subjects during periods of internal disturbance.

I believe, however, that in these instances the Governments concerned denied any legal liability, and indemnified the sufferers as an act of grace. The fact that they did so pay might, however, afford sufficient ground for urging the Sublime Porte to follow a practice usual among civilised Governments, although from the strictly legal point of view there is no actual obligation.

I have, &c.

CHARLES M. MARLING.

Inclosure in No. 91.

Sir E. Pears to Mr. Marling.

Sir, *Constantinople, November* 15, 1909.

WITH reference to the claims of Messrs. the George Chisnell and Sons Company, Limited, and Mr. P. C. A. Leete, agent of the Western Assurance Company, for losses sustained by the massacres, accompanied by the destruction of property, during the troubles in Cilicia, in and around Adana, in the month of April last, I have been informed that the Turkish Government denies liability, and that it has given an answer to this effect to one or more other embassies in Constantinople.

It appears to me that it would be easy to establish that the destruction of property was due to incompetence or neglect on the part of the local authorities. The Vali

of Adana, according to the reports in the newspapers, which I have no reason to doubt, has received a sentence for his conduct in that city. Nor do I doubt that the reports of Mr. Consul Doughty Wylie, and of other consuls in Cilicia, would furnish abundant evidence of culpable neglect or even of culpable action.

The principle of compensation for losses incurred by foreigners in consequence of the action or neglect of the Government has been admitted on many occasions. The one which is probably most in point is that of the massacres in Armenia in 1895–97, where, as His Majesty's Embassy has official knowledge, the claims of those British subjects who had suffered loss during such disturbances, after being carefully examined by the embassy itself, were paid by the Turkish Government through the embassy. If it be said that the Porte saved the principle by stipulating that they should not be paid directly to the claimants, but that the total amount should be added to the contract price of ships and the total sum paid to the embassy, and that such stipulation was made under the belief that the principle of non-responsibility could be saved, the answer is that the excuse is too flimsy to bear examination. There is one practical answer to the question. Did the Ottoman Government pay the claims or not? The subterfuge of adding the amount of the claim to the cost of the ships built in England, France, and America, and to the cost of repairing certain ships by Ansaldo's in Italy, can blind none to the fact that the claims were paid.

I may call attention also to other precedents. The French paid the claims made by foreigners in consequence of the disturbances at Aigues Mortes in the south of France. The United States of America paid those made in consequence of rioting at New Orleans in which Italian subjects were killed, and others suffered damage. The Egyptian Government, presumably with the consent of England, paid the heavy claims for the destruction of property during the troubles in Alexandria pending the revolution headed by Arabi. I might also mention the compensation paid for the destruction of property belonging to Les Pères Blancs in Uganda. Other examples might be cited, and as all the evidence which I have been able to gather shows that the outrages in Cilicia were consequent upon the neglect of the local authorities, even if they were not connived at or instigated by them, I venture to suggest that it is both legally and morally right that the Government should be called upon to pay compensation. It may not be possible directly to curb Moslem fanaticism, but it would at least do something to stimulate the Government to keep it in bounds if they were given to understand that the losses caused to British and other foreign subjects would have to be made good.

I have, &c.
EDWIN PEARS.

42595] No. 92.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 22.)

(No. 911.)

Constantinople, November 15, 1909.

Sir,

IT would be tedious to recount in detail the various interviews which I have had with the Grand Vizier, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, and the Minister of Public Works on the subject of the fusion of the Euphrates and Tigris Navigation Company with the Hamidieh Company, but now that a definite stage has been reached in the negotiations I think that the enclosed memorandum by Colonel Picot of the conversation he had on the 13th instant with Haladjian Effendi, will be of interest as showing the points in dispute and the lines on which agreement may be expected to be attained.

Colonel Picot saw Haladjian Effendi again this morning and found his Excellency in a very conciliatory mood and ready to settle all outstanding points in a reasonable and equitable spirit. He informs me that he is encouraged to hope that the intervention will not be required for the present.

I venture to offer some observations on a few of the points still under discussion.

No. 2. The Disappearance of the Euphrates and Tigris Company.—The demand is made, I think, as much from *amour-propre* and from the necessity of being able to state in Parliament that the English company has entirely disappeared as from any other cause. The Turkish argument is that if the English company is being amalgamated with the Turkish, the former should, like the latter, *ipso facto* cease to exist and the argument seems not unreasonable. The Grand Vizier assured me that if it was desired that the operations of the English company should be continued on the Karun River, the Ottoman Government would not, may, could not, raise any objections, but only desired that it should be done under another name. His Highness said that he thought it best to omit all mention of this Karun River.

No. 5. Annulation of the Rights of the Euphrates and Tigris Company.—I am disposed to think that in refusing to accept the wording of the draft convention that this shall take place, "dès que la société ottomane créée par la présente convention sera mise en pleine jouissance de ses droits et privilèges," the Minister of Public Works foresees that, with so vague an expression, it will always be open to the Euphrates and Tigris Company to argue that in some way or other the new company has not been put in full possession of its rights, and might claim in any case of dispute that it can be reconstituted on its former basis. He is naturally anxious to guard against such a contingency, and taking into consideration the Government's direct interest in giving the new company every assistance, and also the great safeguard which British interests hold in the president's casting vote, I am disposed to think that Mr. Lynch would be well advised in showing a measure of trust in the good intentions of the Government and waive the point.

No 6. Equal Division of fully paid-up Shares.—Colonel Picot has just received a telegram stating that Mr. Lynch has agreed to the transfer of 5 per cent. of the shares, it being of course understood that the working capital of the company will be diminished by the sum they represent, *i.e.*, 16,000*l.*

No. 7. Compensation in case of the Navigation being stopped entirely or partially by the Mesopotamian Irrigation Works.—Haladjian Effendi told Colonel Picot to-day that his Government quite recognised the equity of compensation, but a very short discussion of the various contingencies in which the claim might arise showed that the Minister had not studied the question at all comprehensively; he, however, appeared ready to consider any points which might be brought up in a spirit of perfect fairness.

As regard the sudden turn taken in the negotiations, I am unable to find any entirely satisfactory explanation. When I saw Riaat Pasha on Wednesday night (the 10th instant) he gave me to understand quite unmistakably that the Government would not even admit the possibility of compensation in any shape whatever, nor did he deny, when I implied it, that Haladjian Effendi was the sole obstacle to agreement; but the Minister for Foreign Affairs has in all my conversations with him shown such an astonishing ignorance of the points in dispute that he may perhaps not even have grasped what the Minister of Public Works' views really were; or, again, it is possible that by showing an unyielding front he thought he could score a point or two for his Government off his own bat. It seems on the whole, however, more probable that at the very last minute Haladjian Effendi, who undoubtedly all along conceded the real aspect of the case from his colleagues as much as possible, realised that his obstinacy might bring about the resignation of the Grand Vizier and with it that of the whole Ministry; or else that Hilmi Pasha and the other Ministers have insisted on his coming to terms with the English company or, as an alternative, on his resignation.

Be this as it may, the Government and the Minister of Public Works in particular have now committed themselves, as both the Grand Vizier and Haladjian Effendi informed me, to the fusion of the two companies and to bringing it about without submitting the scheme to the sanction of the Chamber.

I have, &c.
CHARLES M. MARLING.

Inclosure in No. 92.

Memorandum by Colonel Picot respecting his Interview with the Minister of Public Works on November 13, 1909.

AT my interview with the Minister of Public Works on the 13th November, 1909 I discussed with him the points at issue between the Government and the Euphrates and Tigris Companies relative to the fusion of the Turkish and British river services, which had been the subject of negotiations between His Britannic Majesty's chargé d'affaires and the Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs during the past three weeks.

His Excellency stated that Government were prepared to conclude the convention on terms which he would detail to me.

The Council of Ministers were awaiting the result of his communication to me before recording their final decision and instructing him to draw up the convention, "cahier des charges," and statutes. He had therefore to request me to give him a reply in writing. I informed him that I would transmit the proposals to Mr. Lynch for approval; this would necessarily mean delay. His Excellency replied that some delay was of no consequence now that the fusion had been decided on.

He then went on to say that only two points remained to be settled. These were—

1. The question of the transfer of 5 per cent. of shares to Government as fully paid shares.

2. The question of compensation, should the navigation be destroyed by irrigation.

I said that I understood this to be the case, but that it would be more satisfactory if we went through the six or seven different points which had recently been in dispute, and had been the subject of negotiations between His Britannic Majesty's chargé d'affaires and the Minister for Foreign Affairs. The Minister expressed his agreement with this view, but asked me to treat his communication as "officieuse."

The following points were discussed. My summary of his Excellency's statements is taken from notes made at the time. These notes I read to his Excellency after the interview. He confirmed them as correct.

Points Discussed.	*Summary of Minister's Statement.*
1. The form of the convention.	It had been decided that the form was to be that of a fusion between the Government and the Euphrates and Tigris Company. Mr. Whittall would no longer appear therein as concessionnaire. "Concessional rights" would be granted to the Ottoman company. *Notes.*—The Minister stated that he would prefer to see Mr. Whittall's name disappear altogether from the convention. There was no need for a third party in the case, but he might figure as the capitalist.
2. The importation of all material, ships, &c., free from customs duties. (Article 11 of the convention.)	Article 11 of the convention would stand good.
3. The future status of the Euphrates and Tigris Company.	The Euphrates and Tigris Company must disappear. If the company continued its operations on the Karun, it should do so under a different name.
4. Tariff.	There must be no special or differential tariff either as regards places or persons without the previous consent of Government. The maximum tariff would, as stated in the convention, be based on the maxima of years 1907–8. The company would fix its own rates within the limits of the maximum. *Notes.*—The Minister explained that his intention in raising this question had been with a view of preventing special or differential rates which might favour one party or place at the expense of another party or place, and that Government wished to prevent abuse in this respect.
5. The annullation of the rights of the Euphrates and Tigris Company.	The annullation of the rights and privileges of the Euphrates and Tigris Company would take place at the time of issue of the Imperial firman. The annullation would, as argued upon, receive the sanction of the Foreign Office. The following words used in the annullation clause as drafted by the Euphrates and Tigris Company should therefore be omitted:— "dès que la société ottomane créée par la présente convention sera mise en pleine jouissance de ses droits et privilèges."

Notes.—The Minister explained that the Ottoman company would spring into being on the issue of the Imperial firman, and would at once be entitled to all the rights and privileges of its concession.

The Government would itself be the support of the company and any such proviso as the one in question was unnecessary, and, moreover, showed a distrust which was unwarranted. The Government would not tolerate this proviso. The Minister expressed the wish (16th November) that, as the beneficiary mentioned in the firmans and other documents, Mr. Lynch should also sign the annullation.

6. Five per cent. shares transferred to Government to make up their holding to 50 per cent. the share capital.	It had been decided definitely that the shares must be transferred as fully paid-up shares. This decision was final. *Notes.*—I informed the Minister that it had been explained by His Britannic Majesty's chargé d'affaires to the Minister of Foreign Affairs that the transfer of these shares as fully paid shares necessarily entailed an equivalent reduction (16,000*l.*) in the working capital subscribed by the Euphrates and Tigris Company, as the Euphrates and Tigris Company would not both transfer these shares and at the same time pay for them. His Excellency agreed that this was so.
7. Compensation in case of irrigation.	The Government reserved to itself the absolute right of carrying out such irrigation works as it might consider desirable. The Ottoman company would have no right to raise any objections to irrigation, but should there at any time be a total cessation of navigation ("arrêt total") owing to irrigation the Ottoman company would, *de facto*, become entitled to reimbursement by the Government of its fully paid-up capital less the sum amortised. Further, should there be an "empêchement constant" over a period of six months during the year the company would be entitled to consider this as an "arrêt total," and claim accordingly. The payment of this compensation would entail the transfer to Government of all the properties of the company. *Notes.*—The Minister explained that the justice of compensating the Ottoman company in case of total interruption of navigation was recognised, but Government would only consider the question of compensation on the broad lines of an "arrêt total" or an "arrêt constant." Government would not enter into any discussion for compensation for partial interruption such as might be caused by shallow water during certain seasons.

H. PIGOT.

[42597] No. 93.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(*Received November* 22.)

(No. 913.)

Sir, *Constantinople, November* 16, 1909.

THE condition of affairs in Asia Minor has during the few months since Sir G. Lowther addressed to you his despatch No. 614 of the 2nd August last been fairly quiescent until within a few weeks ago, but reports just received from His Majesty's consular officers at Bitlis, Van, Erzeroum, and Mosul show that recently there has been a considerable revival of political murders and general inse-

curity in those districts. The causes of these regrettable events the local Government officials have in some cases not been at great pains to investigate, and it is to be feared that unless more stringent measures are adopted, particularly in the Van and Erzeroum districts, the reactionaries and Kurdish tribes will be encouraged to revive their intrigues and revert to their old methods of obtaining a livelihood by pillage and murder.

His Majesty's consul at Mosul reports several recent cases of the posts being stopped by the Hamarend Kurds, and it has been necessary to warn British firms that the roads from Bagdad to Mosul are unsafe. The Government are supposed to be taking active measures against the tribes, but they escape over the Persian frontier at the approach of the troops, and recross again at other points. The neighbourhood of Mosul itself is disturbed also. At Elkosh Mr. Reed, treasurer of the Archbishop of Canterbury's mission, had his house surrounded by an angry crowd not long ago, and was threatened several times. The local priests are goading the people against the English, and Mr. Wilkie Young has had to warn lady missionaries not to approach the Christian villages of the district for fear of demonstrations.

The vali, who had been away on some unknown expedition, leaving the administration practically in the hands of the notorious Sukonji Pasha, returned on the 31st October with some thirty prisoners, his troops being in miserable condition, but I have not yet heard where he had been.

Since the middle of October the district of Van has been the scene of a number of outrages. On the 15th October the bodies of six poor Armenian pedlars were found near Adeljivas and brought by their relatives to Van; they had been killed by some Kurds of Haidernuti Hussein Pasha, who were for the time being in the service of Major Riza Bey. The latter is still in prison, but he seems to direct the activity of his followers from there. The vali promised that justice should be done, and has sent an expedition to find and arrest the culprits.

On the 17th an Armenian woman was found murdered on the shores of Lake Van, and as the three or four men who were known to have been accompanying her have entirely disappeared, it is surmised that this is again an act of Kurds, who have thrown the men's bodies into the lake.

The vali had about a week previously gone to stay with the powerful Kurdish chief Hussein Pasha, and this somewhat injudicious public demonstration of friendship is considered to have had the effect of encouraging Hussein's followers to recommence their depredations. On the 25th October two Russian Armenians were attacked near Bergeri, but one escaped and reported the murder of his companion to the local authorities, who dispatched some gendarmes in pursuit of the murderers. A still more serious raid was also made on the Nestorian villages south of Sairt by some Kurdish tribes, for whose punishment it has been necessary to send troops from Van, Bitlis, and Mousb.

These crimes have caused much consternation in the vilayet, where they are regarded as a return to the old régime; there had been great hopes that the establishment of constitutionalism had put an end to them.

From Erzeroum there are similar cases of Kurdish crimes to report. On the 9th October an Armenian was murdered by some Kurds by order of Riza Bey's brother, Colonel Fetullah Bey, for daring to buy the tithes of his village; the Government promised to take energetic steps, but so far nothing has been done to discover the murderers. On the 15th two Armenians of Khaizan were killed by the men of Vapore Guendjo, and on the 19th the Armenian priest of Khuyt was killed and the Armenian headman wounded by one Bishar of the Shego tribe for having proceeded to Adonin Council to demand the restoration of their land, which has been seized by Kurds.

The Government's negligence with regard to these crimes and their failure to make a show of the required energy are the more unfortunate, inasmuch as in other respects the districts in question are continuing to enjoy considerable peace and prosperity under the new régime; and in some ways the authorities are doing their best to secure good administration and keep the country quiet. With this aim in view, on the arrival of a noted and influential Kurdish chief—Abdul Kadir—at Van from Constantinople last month, the Vali of Van induced him to summon all the Kurdish chiefs of the vicinity and to give them a series of lectures on the advantages of the constitutional system and the necessity of showing obedience to the new régime. The new Vali of Erzeroum, Djevad Bey, has also shown some activity in negotiating complaints made against some of the more notorious Kurds of the district, and at the end of last month he departed on a tour of inspection in the Bayezid district, one of his objects being, it is believed, to examine into a number of charges brought against Hussein Pasha of Patnotz, who

has been summoned to Erzeroum pending an enquiry by the local tribunals, the charges being chiefly of seizure of lands belonging to other Kurds and collection and appropriation of the taxes.

A crime of another kind is reported to me from Erzeroum. His Majesty's consul at that place reports that Yervant Topdjian, head of the local Tashnakist organisation, and a man who was held in great esteem by Christians and Moslems alike for the tactful and moderate attitude he adopted during the troubles in the spring, was murdered on the 25th October in a han at Hadrak. The murder is attributed to an Armenian Abed, who is said to have been expelled by Yervant from the Tashnak association on suspicion of being in Russian pay; but there is another version of the incident, which says that Abed and his brother voluntarily left the association in order to form another on their own account, and that they were not informers. The crime is therefore a mystery at present, but the loss of Yervant has been keenly felt throughout the district.

I have, &c.
CHARLES M. MARLING

[42997] No. 94.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received November 24.)

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of Viscount Morley, forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of a telegram to the Viceroy, dated the 16th November, relative to the Abu Musa oxide question.

India Office, November 23, 1909.

Inclosure in No. 94.

Viscount Morley to Government of India.

(Telegraphic.) P. *India Office, November 16, 1909.*

PROPOSED shipment from Abu Musa referred to in your telegram of the 28th October last may be sanctioned.

[42972] No. 95.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 24.)

(No. 358. Confidential.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, November 24, 1909.*

BLOCK informs me that Djavid Bey tells him that French Government are making their consent to the 4 per cent. customs increase conditional on—

1. The payment of certain French claims.
2. The appointment of Frenchmen in the provincial custom-houses.
3. An assurance that none of the proceeds of the customs increase be devoted to railway guarantees.

[42198] No. 96.

Foreign Office to Board of Trade.

Sir, *Foreign Office, November 26, 1909.*

WITH reference to my letter of the 5th ultimo respecting oil concessions in Mesopotamia, I am directed by Secretary Sir E. Grey to transmit to you copies of correspondence as marked in the margin on the subject.*

It will be observed that Mr. Harmsworth does not say in his letter of the

* Nos. 56 and 87.

16th November that he intends to invest capital in the enterprise or to work it himself.

In these circumstances, subject to the concurrence of the Board of Trade, Sir E. Grey proposes to inform Mr. Harmsworth that, unless he can show that he or a group of English financiers already formed of which he is a member will undertake to work the concession, if he should succeed in obtaining it, His Majesty's Government will not be able to support him at Constantinople.

I am, &c.
LOUIS MALLET.

[43437] No. 97.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received November 27.)

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of Viscount Morley, forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of a telegram from the Viceroy, dated the 26th November, relative to the withdrawal of Turkish soldiers from Zakhmuniyah Island.

India Office, November 27, 1909.

Inclosure in No. 97.

Government of India to Viscount Morley.

(Telegraphic.) P. *November* 26, 1909.

TURKS and Zakhmuniyah Island. Your telegram of the 13th October last. Political Resident, Persian Gulf, telegraphs, under date the 24th November, to the following effect:—

"The political agent at Bahrein informs me that there are not now any Turkish troops in the island of Zakhmuniyah. Am sending report by post."

[43480] No. 98.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 29.)

(No. 917.)

Sir, *Constantinople, November* 18, 1909.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 891 of the 9th instant, in which I had the honour to forward to you copy of a despatch from His Majesty's consul-general at Smyrna reporting on the attempt made by a band of brigands to capture Mr. Eric Paterson, I have the honour to report that this embassy addressed a note to the Sublime Porte recounting the facts of the case and asking that strong measures should be taken, and I am now informed by the Minister of the Interior that Mr. Paterson's assailants, who are Greeks, have been arrested and will be sternly punished—probably hanged.

I have, &c.
CHARLES M. MARLING.

[43481] No. 99.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 29.)

(No. 918.)

Sir, *Constantinople, November* 19, 1909.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 797 of the 29th September, I have the honour to forward herewith a despatch from the acting vice-consul at Adana, inclosing, with some observations on the relief and other questions, the second report of the Adana Government Relief Committee.[9]

I am instructing Mr. Chafy to continue his membership of the Finance Commission in view of the facts that it still has control of all relief operations, that its relief work is

[9] Not printed

likely to be extended again in consequence of the recent floods, and that his presence will help to keep the administration of the fund to its proper purposes.

I have, &c.
CHARLES M. MARLING.

Inclosure in No. 99.

Acting Vice-Consul Chafy to Mr. Marling.

(No. 16.)

Sir, *Adana, November* 10, 1909.

I HAVE the honour to submit herewith a copy of the second report of the Adana Government Relief Committee,[9] together with some comments on it and notes on the relief question in general.

This report may convey the impression that little has been actually accomplished during the three months that the committee has already been operating. In truth, only a quarter of the total sum at the committee's disposal has yet been spent. At the same time all sympathisers with the massacre victims must feel glad, and those who know this country pleasantly surprised, that the Turkish Government has done anything at all. The fact is at any rate unique in history. The way in which the present vali of Adana, a young regimental officer with absolutely no experience of work of this nature and no precedents or compatriots to guide him, having to contend with a mountain of apathy and even ill-will on the Turkish, and a thorny hedge of suspicion and discontent on the Armenian side has risen to the occasion, had the good sense to apply to foreigners for advice and co-operation, grasped the main principles of relief work, and got his machinery going is surely worthy of the best ideals of Young Turkey.

No doubt if the £T. 200,000 had been placed in the hands of some competent, philanthropic, and single-minded body of Europeans, say the American Mission, quicker and more satisfactory results could now be shown.

But the public conscience of a Relief Committee, including Turks, who, however young, have inherited certain fixed ideas regarding Armenians, and whose schemes for immediate relief are confused with rosy plans for the reform of a vilayet, of heads of Christian communities squabbling unecclesiastically over the portions of their respective flocks, and of various suave gentlemen of European extraction whose names terminate in "ski" and their heads in turbooshes, representing the interests of various large concerns not wholly Ottoman, is necessarily not identical with that of a body of missionaries, as the present report is not wanting in indications to show.

As a matter of fact an ugly-looking hitch, of which no satisfactory explanation is forthcoming, arose in the granting of the whole credit of £T. 200,000 to the Ottoman and Agricultural Banks here. The full sum is now (I am assured by the local bank director) at the immediate disposal of the committee. But a most unfortunate delay has thus been occasioned, especially in the distribution of loans to needy farmers, from the sum of £T. 100,000 voted for that purpose. Those who have been unable to arrange for private advances will in many cases have to let their fields go unsown this autumn. It is to be hoped that, as promised, the disposal of this loan money will now be pushed forward with expedition.

The work actually accomplished, as set forth in the report, amounts in sum to the housing of the homeless in the outlying districts in scanty huts and hovels and the issue of starvation rations to the hungry for a period of three months. A rigid economy has been observed in the spending (which is at any rate honest as far as it goes) of this first £T. 50,000. Some of the mud huts are at the present moment in imminent danger of being washed away by the torrential autumn rains for want of the roof which funds are unable to supply.

Granting of food relief, except in the case of families entirely bereft of bread-winners, is now to cease altogether. This measure, though doubtless entailing individual suffering, seems on the whole to be wise. Missionaries may judge it brutal, but large European employers of labour think otherwise. As the vali puts it, "Iané tatli oldu" ("The relief has become sweet"), and it is certain that the looms and jutts in the factories are remaining idle for want of hands, though wages are higher than usual just now.

American missionaries working under the auspices of the local Government, and capitalised from relief funds, are busy establishing an embroidery industry for women and girls. It is to be hoped that work on the Bagdad Railway will shortly begin here and afford relief to the male sex.

[9] Not printed.

Armenians display a marvellous knack of alighting neatly on their feet in circumstances where other races, say English or Germans, would be engulphed in deep mud. The Turks are well aware of this. On the whole perhaps it is as well that the corn sacks should be closed once and for all.

As hinted above, the vali is apt to confuse the functions of the Relief Committee with those of the Adana municipality. The ruins of Adana have scarcely been touched as yet. Elaborate schemes for enlarging the streets (with a view to tramway traffic) and of laying out the city on an approved model are all very well for Midhat Pashas *in posse*, but possibly less palatable to massacre refugees forced to protract a miserable *esse* by fifties in a cellar, while philanthropic engineers at a salary of £ T. 12 a-month, are vainly searching (as the report pathetically admits) for those elusive models and plans on which to improve.

Meanwhile the vali is showing no little eagerness to shift the further burden of ordinary relief work on to the shoulders of American missionaries and other foreign sympathisers.

Very likely his whole attitude, looked at from a statesman's point of view, is wise. Your Excellency is the best judge of this, and will doubtless instruct me as to the advisability of continuing my membership of the Financial Commission, whose functions are tending to depart from the scope of ordinary relief work.

In this connection it is my duty to bring to your Excellency's notice the growing prominence of German influence in this vilayet with the impending advance of the Bagdad Railway. An important share in the laying out of the new quarter of this city has been assigned to an Austrian subject employed as an agent of the Bagdad Railway, while the projected loan of £ T. 30,000, mentioned in a former despatch, for the erection of a new quarter of this city near the proposed site of the railway station, has been advanced by the Deutsche Bank.

I lately made a tour of inspection of a magnificent farm of nearly 1,000,000 Turkish acres near Hamidieh. This immense farm is Crown property, and was allowed to run to waste under a military estate agent appointed by Abdul Hamid. I was informed by an agricultural specialist that the possibilities of this almost virgin corn land, situated on the banks of the River Jeihun, are practically unlimited. The vali is alive to them, has abolished the military agent, and is anxious to turn the whole concern with all possible despatch into money for the construction of roads throughout the vilayet. The Germans are already planning to secure a footing there. I inspected most excellent maps of the estate recently prepared by an engineer with a name ending in "ski." It seems a pity that English capitalists could not be interested in this matter.

M. Favre, a Swiss philanthropist touring the district affected by the massacres, in the interest of relief, is at present in Adana. It is to be hoped the appeal he hopes to make to his countrymen will bear fruit. Any further help from abroad will be extremely welcome.

The promised hangings have not yet taken place, nor do they appear likely to do so.

I have, &c.
R. E. W. CHAFY.

[43485] No. 100.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 29.)

(No. 923.)

Sir, *Constantinople, November 19, 1909.*

UNTIL the negotiations over the Lynch question had taken a smoother course, it appeared to me better to postpone approaching the Sublime Porte on the subject of the establishment of a money order service between Bahrein and Turkey; but I took an opportunity yesterday of mentioning the matter to the Minister for Foreign Affairs, and explained to him the wishes of the Government of India.

Rifaat Pasha said he had no knowledge of the matter, but he thought it would be better not to raise any contentious questions in those regions at present, as it might give rise to an outcry against the Government similar to that raised in connection with the Lynch *affaire* in a neighbouring part of the Empire. I observed that Bahrein and Mesopotamia were scarcely contiguous, and said that it would be open to the Turkish Government in agreeing to the proposed service to make stipulations that the *status quo* should not be considered as affected thereby, and I expressed the hope that

the Porte would not stand in the way of the development of the commercial relations of Bahrein with the Ottoman Empire.

His Excellency said he would give the question careful consideration.

I have, &c.
CHARLES M. MARLING.

[43491] No. 101.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 29.)

(No. 929.)

Sir *Pera, November 22, 1909.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith a memorandum by the commercial attaché to this embassy dealing with certain points raised in the enclosure to your despatch No. 302 of the 24th September last, showing the position in which the negotiations for the various railway concessions in the Empire stand at the present moment. In the body of the memorandum Mr. Weakley calls attention to a recent communiqué from the Ministry of Commerce and Public Works announcing that in future applicants for concessions must send in with their proposals evidence of their capacity from a financial point of view to carry out the scheme for which they are tendering, and that failing such evidence the application will be ignored. I venture to suggest that it would be expedient to give publicity in England to this requirement of the Turkish Government.

I have, &c.
CHARLES M. MARLING.

Inclosure 1 in No. 101.

Memorandum by Commercial Attaché to British Embassy in Turkey.

WITH further reference to the enquiry from the Board of Trade, contained in their despatch of the 14th September, copy of which was enclosed in the Foreign Office despatch No. 302 of the 24th September, 1909, concerning the proposals which had been put before the Turkish Government by two American subjects, Messrs. Glasgow and Chester, for the construction of a system of railways in Asia Minor starting from Yumourtalik, in the Gulf of Alexandretta, nothing of any note has transpired to materially change the situation as reported in the last despatch on the subject, No. 851 of the 15th ultimo.

From recent information obtained at the Public Works Department, it appears that both Chester and Glasgow have, so far, been unable to satisfy the department that the respective syndicates which they represent are in a financial position sufficient to carry out the undertakings they have proposed. The demands which have been put forward by these two persons are not therefore considered serious by the department, and have been practically put aside for the moment.

The Belgian syndicate, on whose behalf Colonel Schaeffer has applied for a railway concession, the details of which are practically identical with those in Glasgow's scheme, is considered quite sound by the Ministry, but it appears that no further steps have been taken by Schaeffer at the department, and consequently the negotiations are at a standstill.

In view of the numerous applications for concessions which the Public Works Department has received from various persons who seem to have no financial standing nor any technical knowledge for carrying out the work they ask for, the department has decided in future to reject all applications that may be made by persons who are unable to give proof of their financial and technical ability to carry out the undertakings or concessions for which they may apply.

An official notice from the Public Works Department, published in the local press of the 15th instant, of which a copy is enclosed herewith, states that all applications which do not conform to the required conditions set forth, will in future be ignored. A notification is further made in the same communiqué to all applicants whose demands are now in the possession of the department, to the effect that they must furnish the department with necessary proof of their financial capacity, at latest by the 1st (14th) December, 1909, otherwise their applications will not be considered. It is expected that, in view of this recent

official measures and notification that some of the present applicants, Glasgow amongst others, will probably drop out, but I was informed that, as the scheme first propounded by Glasgow has been adopted as a basis for negotiation by Parliament, and the Government has been empowered to treat with applicants for this particular concession (see Embassy despatch No. 783 of the 25th September, 1909, enclosing copy of decree of the Senate), the Department is open to negotiate with any serious syndicate which might wish to come forward.

I ascertained that a Prince Hassan and Colonel Gordon, both acting on behalf of the Ethelburga Syndicate, had been to the Ministry, and had expressed the desire of applying for the concession, but had not at the time put in a formal demand.

Tripoli–Homs Railway.—Attempts have been made at various times during the last four years by a certain Mustapha Izzeddin Effendi, a prominent merchant of Tripoli in Syria and a large shareholder in the local Tripoli–Homs–Hama Road and Diligence Company ("Shirket-i-Vataniè") to change the road and diligence concession for one for a railway between Tripoli and Homs. In consequence of Izzeddin's action in the matter, the French Company, the Société du Chemin de Fer de Damas-Homs et Prolongement, felt it necessary to intervene, and were obliged, unwillingly it is thought, to put forward their preferential rights, and to insist on the concession being given to them. As a result of negotiations which have been spread over the greater part of a year, the concession for this short branch line, which will link up the main line at Homs with the sea-coast at Tripoli, has been finally granted to the French société.

The convention, a copy of which I have so far been unable to obtain, was signed on the 30th October last; the concession is for eighty-eight years, and its date of expiry is fixed so as to coincide with the date of expiry of that of the main line (Aleppo–Rayak). It is to be of normal gauge (1·44 metre), and will be about 100 kilom. in length, and will, it is understood, take about two years in building. No kilometric guarantees have been granted, and it is presumed the railway company will take over all the rights and material of the "Shirket-i-Vataniè" of Tripoli. A general meeting of the société has been convened in Paris for the 14th of next month, when the new convention will be discussed and measures will be taken for providing the funds necessary for the construction of the branch line.

Homs–Baghdad Railway Project.—I was informed at the Ministry that the Department had decided in favour of the building of a railway to Bagdad, taking Homs or Damascus as the starting-point. The report on the subject has been forwarded to the Porte, and will be submitted to the Council of Ministers.

Hodeida–Sana'a Railway Project.—The concession for this railway was applied for by a certain Elie Leon Bey, of Paris, and negotiations terminated in the drawing up of a preliminary convention. In view, however, of the bill which was passed by the Chamber regarding this concession, and which was reported in despatch No. 686 of the 23rd August last, the Department of Works decided to send a special technical commission to survey the proposed "tracée" and to prepare estimates of the probable cost of construction. The commission has already left for Hodeida and will, it is expected be away some considerable time. The estimates and plans which are to be furnished by this commission, will eventually form the basis upon which the department will ask for tenders. I was given to understand that Leon Bey would enjoy preferential rights on equal terms, but the Government are determined to secure the best possible conditions for building this line. The Government, however, recognise the fact, that in view of the many years which must elapse before such a railway could be made remunerative, it would be impossible to induce capitalists to embark in such an enterprise without some form of guarantee being given on the capital outlayed. The construction of this railway is, however, of the utmost importance to the Government both from the economical as well as from the military point of view, and the question of granting a guarantee has been fully admitted in principle. No decision has yet been come to as to the form this guarantee should take, but it is supposed that an annual guaranteed interest on the capital will be the one which will find most favour, and, doubtless, the merits of the various tenders, will be judged, apart from other considerations, in great measure by the rate of interest the applicants will be prepared to accept.

Samsoun–Sivas Railway Project.—I am informed that the Department of Public Works has already been approached by a French group, of which Count Vitalis is the head, with a view to the commencement of negotiations for this concession. No formal application has so far been sent in, but it is understood that the French group have succeeded in obtaining the promise of Russian financial support in the enterprise, and that should the political difficulty in regard to the Black Sea basin be successfully overcome by this arrangement, the group in question will commence active negotiations. The scheme will comprise the building of large harbour works at Samsoon.

Danube–Adriatic Railway.—Surveys are to be made of the country in Turkish territory through which this line will pass. The administration of the Salonica–Constantinople junction railway have undertaken the work, but until the Turkish Government is prepared to grant some form of guarantee it is believed the line will not be built. The surveyors are now on the ground, but can apparently do little owing to the difficulties they meet with at the hands of the local authorities.

Demir–Hissar–Djuma-i-Bala Railway.—No progress has been made with project as the Government is unwilling to grant any guarantee.

Pauderma–Soma Railway.—It is understood that negotiations are still proceeding with the Smyrna–Cassaba Railway Company.

Ports.—M. Godard, one of the new technical advisers of the Department of Works, has been entrusted with a mission to examine and report on the ports of the Syrian coast. His first visit will be to Tripoli, and he will then visit Mersina, Alexandretta, Haifa, and Jaffa, where he will in each case study and survey the ports with a view to enable the department to determine at which of these ports could harbour works be profitably undertaken.

In conclusion I may add that regret was expressed by the officials at the department that British capitalists had so far shown little if any desire to enquire into and examine the various projects which the Ministry had in hand.

Inclosure 2 in No. 101.

Notice published in the "Stamboul" of November 16, 1909.

MINISTÈRE DU COMMERCE ET DES TRAVAUX PUBLICS.

UN communiqué que nous envoie ce département dit :—

L'expérience a montré qu'un certain nombre de demandeurs de concession ne possèdent pas les moyens financiers et techniques nécessaires et qu'ils ont simplement en vue de revendre au plus offrant les contrats dont ils sollicitent l'obtention.

Cette manière de procéder est aussi contraire aux intérêts de l'Etat qu'à ceux de tous les demandeurs sérieux et du public en général. Aussi le Ministère du Commerce et des Travaux Publics a-t-il décidé de ne plus prendre en considération que les propositions émanant des personnes qui disposent des concours financiers et techniques nécessaires et qui fourniront la preuve.

En conséquence, toutes demandes qui ne rempliront pas ces conditions seront considérées comme nulles et non avenues. En ce qui concerne les demandes déjà produites, leurs auteurs auront à fournir, au plus tard jusqu'au 1er (14) décembre, 1325 (1909), les justifications ci-dessus indiquées, faute de quoi leurs propositions seront classées sans suite.

Les intéressés devront adresser les dites justifications au bureau des conseillers-légistes du Ministère, où des explications complémentaires leurs seront données s'il y a lieu.

[43495] No. 102.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(*Received November 29.*)

(No. 934.)

Sir, *Pera, November 24, 1909.*

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your despatch No. 346 of the 9th instant, requesting my observations on Mr. Beckett's suggestion that his application for a railway concession from Youmourtalik inland should be examined by the Financial Commission as well as by the Ministry of Public Works.

It appears to me to be out of the question that the Embassy should make such a suggestion to the Sublime Porte. Such a proceeding would be entirely contrary to ordinary procedure, the Public Works Department being the only recognized channel through which the Government receive applications for railway concessions; the department examines these applications, and on their advice the Government accept or reject the proposals made.

I do not see what useful purpose could be gained by having these applications referred to the Financial Commission, whose duties are other than those connected with schemes for public works, and, moreover, as the various State departments are very sensitive on the question of "ministerial responsibility," and the Minister of Public Works has on several occasions recently resented the interference even of the Grand Vizier in matters affecting his department, I consider that it would be impossible to approach the Sublime Porte in the sense suggested by Mr. Beckett.

I have, &c.
CHARLES M. MARLING.

[43496] No. 103.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 29.)

(No. 935.)
Sir, *Constantinople, November 24, 1909.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 907 of the 15th instant, I have the honour to forward herewith a despatch from Mr. Chafy, His Majesty's acting vice-consul at Adana, reporting on the floods at that place.

I have, &c.
CHARLES M. MARLING.

Inclosure 1 in No. 103.

Acting Vice-Consul Chafy to Mr. Marling.

(No. 17.)
Sir, *Adana, November 17, 1909.*

I HAVE the honour to submit the following brief account of the disastrous flood at Adana as reported in haste in my telegrams of the 14th instant.

It is impossible by this mail to submit details of the full extent of the damage done to property in the vilayet.

Heavy rains had been falling almost incessantly during the week preceding the flood, and the river had swollen to a remarkable extent. Miniature floods had already been formed in many places, and railway communication between Adana and Tarsus (now resumed) had been interrupted. On the 13th instant, the rains continuing and the river rising steadily, the authorities judged a flood imminent. A strong earthen dyke already existing on the spot where the town is most threatened from the overflow of the river was the only protection which remained against disaster. On the evening and most of the night of the 13th the low-lying quarters of the city, consisting chiefly of the mud dwellings of the poor, were by orders of the vali cleared of inhabitants by means of carts, horses, and rafts. This prompt measure doubtless prevented a serious loss of life by drowning. At about 2 A.M. on the morning of Sunday the 14th the river waters, impelled by a strong wind, burst the dyke, rushed downhill with immense velocity, and completely flooded the greater part of the town of Adana for the space of about eight hours and to a depth in many places of from 4 to 5 feet. The total cessation of the rain alone prevented a catastrophe of the first magnitude. As it was the water subsided steadily throughout the day, and by nightfall access from one end of the town to the other was possible once more on dry land.

It is impossible as yet to estimate the extent of the damage done by the destruction of houses built of sun-dried mud bricks, property such as grain and cotton stored on the ground floor of buildings, and newly sown crops. A Government commission is working to this end, meanwhile the vali places the loss in Adana alone at £T. 100,000, which is probably a conservative estimate. Five hundred mud houses are said to have been completely destroyed, in most cases with the goods they contained, and many more are in danger of collapse from the action of the sun drying and cracking the sodden structures. That no loss of life is up to the present reported in Adana seems miraculous, considering the volume and rapidity of the flood. Several persons have been drowned in the kaza of Ammoor in the sanjak of Ichel, the acting caimakam of Issiahic is stated to have perished while on his way to Adana, and a similar fate nearly overtook the mutessarif of Suleikie.

No damage to British property has yet been reported to me. The inundation of the ground floor compound, and stables of the British vice-consulate was only averted

by banking up the entrances with mud. Several hundred refugees sought asylum in the new American hospital.

The Government authorities are taking prompt measures for relief. The vali and the military commandant waded through the water on horseback and did all that was possible in the emergency. The homeless refugees—Christians, Mussulmans, and fellaheen, who must number some thousands—are temporarily lodged in khans, churches, mosques, and any available places of refuge, and are being fed by the municipality. £T. 5,000 has already been put at the disposal of the local Government for this purpose. It remains to be seen what further measures will be taken to cope with the disaster. The International Relief Committee has decided to reserve definite action on any large scale till the attitude of the Government is made known. At present the latter seem prepared to face the situation unaided.

It is useless within the compass of an official report to attempt to convey an impression of the indescribable misery brought on the people of Adana by this fresh catastrophe. The victims are literally sitting on the ruins of their homes stunned by disaster. Some of them spent the whole night clinging to trees. Many of the houses destroyed are those of massacre victims recently repaired by the International Relief Committee. This time the blow has fallen on Moslem and Christian alike, and the former are not slow to attribute it to divine vengeance.

I have the honour to enclose a translation of an official account of the flood telegraphed by the Vali of Adana to the Minister of the Interior on the 14th instant.

I have, &c.
R. E. W. CHAFY.

Inclosure 2 in No. 103.

Vali of Adana to Minister of the Interior.

(Translation.)
(Telegraphic.) *November 14, 1909.*

THOUGH the water has in some degree begun to subside, the main part of the city is still exposed to the danger of a flood. As stated in my former telegram, the quarters called Yar Bashi, Yeni Mahalla, and Char Chabouk, which form the environs of the railway station and are the parts of the town the most exposed to risk, are placed in a grave danger. There is nothing to do now but to trust in the gracious protection of the Almighty. Throughout the night the municipality had carts hard at work, where they could not pass horses, and, in places where the water was several metres deep, rafts. By means of these untiring efforts whole families were transported to places of safety and the threatened quarters emptied of inhabitants. For the rest it was hoped that the city would be saved by the earthen dyke erected in the Yar Bashi neighbourhood. Houses and factories were got ready to receive the families rescued by the municipality carts, and bread was baked from flour secured wholesale from the factories, and every effort was made to provide for the immediate needs of the victims. The quarters exposed to the attack of the water likely to be freed by the bursting of the dyke were completely cleared before midnight. At 8 o'clock in the night (Turkish time) the dyke, unable to resist any longer the violence of the attack of the water whose speed was increased by a powerful north-east wind, gave way and was reached for a length of 8 metres. In an instant the water, finding a free outlet, rushing with a marvellous velocity, had enveloped the environs of the railway station, the main avenue running past Trypani's factory, the Kuru Kyupru quarter, and the districts behind the station called Yeni Mahalla and Char Chabouk. Though the outlet of the water in this direction relieved the volume in other parts, many houses, which were exposed to the flood for twenty-four hours, collapsed one after another. Near the station the water attained a depth of over 2 metres. To-day, thanks to a bright sun and to the dropping of the wind, I am of opinion that no further danger is threatened, but the issue of events depends on the elements.

Every effort is being made to provide immediate relief for the sufferers. Though part of the property in the ruined houses was saved, a large amount was carried away by the flood. It is not yet possible to estimate the damage in detail, but considering the events of the last twenty-four hours I imagine the loss in Adana alone amounts to £T. 100,000. The environs of the town are under water to the distance of a journey of eight to ten hours. It is certain that the newly-sown crops have been either altogether swept away or ruined by the earth borne along in the course of the flood. Horsemen and gendarmes sent out to the outlying districts at daybreak found the way

impassable and were obliged to return in the evening. Consequently news from outside is not yet obtainable. It is only possible to base the supposition that all the surrounding districts were not flooded on the fact that some of the environs of the town escaped. This inference is also supported by the view to be obtained here through field-glasses. Places where the water did not reach the villages can be observed. Though up to now no fatal casualty has been reported, it is inevitable that a disaster of such magnitude should have claimed a few victims. The town is still under water. No one remains in the threatened districts. More than thirty rafts, over 100 raftsmen, with gendarmes and soldiers are engaged in transporting the people to places of safety. Relief for the victims is assured for to-day. The water has in some degree subsided. I shall naturally forward further details as they are obtainable. As the Adana municipality is too poor to bear the expense of even £ T. 100, I beg in any case that a draft for £ T. 5,000 may be dispatched to the provincial treasury to-morrow to meet the immediate needs of the flood victims.

May God protect the property of the Ottomans from like afflictions!

[43677] No. 104.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(*Received November* 29.)

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of Viscount Morley, forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of inclosures in a letter from the Foreign Secretary to the Government of India dated the 11th November, relative to a conversation between Sheikh Mubarek and the political agent at Koweit.

India Office, November 27, 1909.

Inclosure 1 in No. 104.

Major Trevor to Government of India.

(Confidential.) *Bushire, October* 14, 1909.

I HAVE the honour to forward, for the information of the Government of India, a copy of a letter concerning a conversation which the Sheikh of Koweit held with the political agent.

2. Sheikh Mubarek appears to be in a very friendly mood at present, as instanced by his spontaneous offer of the agency rent-free, and by this conversation; but I think there must be some ulterior motive in all this affability.

Inclosure 2 in No. 104.

Captain Shakespear to Major Trevor.

(Confidential.) *Koweit, October* 11, 1909.

I HAVE the honour to report the substance of a conversation which the Sheikh of Mubarek held with me a few days ago on the affairs of the Sheikh of Mohammerah, in case it may prove of interest to Government.

2. It appears that shortly after Major Cox's last visit to Mohammerah, Sheikh Khazal called together the headmen of his tribes and discussed with them the advantages of definitely binding himself to the British Government by a document, which, evidently from Sheikh Mubarek's description, was intended to be a regular treaty on more or less equal terms. The headmen of the tribes were very averse to any such proposal, pointing out that, though they might make a treaty and so avoid Persian and Turkish interference in their affairs, they would be subject to endless interference from the British, who would, little by little, reduce them and their sheikh (Khazal) to the condition of Bahrein, where now nothing was possible without the "order" of the political agent; they could see no compensating advantages in such an arrangement, especially as at present they found that a combination of all the near Arab tribes could make things so unpleasant for either Persian or Turks, that Mohammerah generally succeeded in securing its own way very satisfactorily. Sheikh

Khazal was, however, insistent, and pointed out that, though such had been the case of Bahrein, it had been brought about from within by the Khalifa family's own foolish method of working, and contrasted our treatment of Bahrein with that of Koweit, where a political agent had proved of considerable help to Sheikh Mubarek. Finally, it appears that by argument, specious promises, and lavish hospitality, Sheikh Khazal prevailed on his Cha'ab headmen to agree that, if he put his signature to any document of the kind contemplated, they would follow his lead and also append their signatures. In reply to my query as to why Sheikh Khazal should be so anxious to secure the signature of the headmen to such a document as well as his own, Sheikh Mubarek pointed out that that was the only certain way by which Sheikh Khazal could bind all the various subtribes to their promise, fearing as he did, if anything subsequently occurred to which one of the tribes objected, that he might be unable to prevent all of them siding with the disappointed one and leaving him without the necessary support either to force compliance or induce it pacifically.

3. The above was conveyed to me by Sheikh Mubarek quite spontaneously, and at the moment struck me as being specially produced for British consumption or as a *ballon d'essai*. Then, on his own account, Sheikh Mubarek urged the advantages to the British Government in some such tie, pointing out that between them he and Sheikh Khazal owned practically the whole of the cultivated land on the Shatt-el-Arab up to Mohammerah and beyond.

4. I have no doubt, from the careful way in which the sheikh expressed himself, that this communication and probably the form of it were carefully arranged between himself and Sheikh Khazal at one of their frequent meetings at Failiya, solely with an eye to their own advantage; each desires to rid himself of what authority the Turkish or Persian Government may have over him and to replace it for the benevolent protection of the British Government. Though the sheikhs may talk of the benefits of such protection, their sole idea is that when obtained it will give them a guarantee from foreign aggression, while leaving them absolute within their own territories to do what they please with life and property within their respective jurisdictions.

5. I have reported the conversation, not so much as likely to lead to anything further, but to show how these two sheikhs regard matters in this region. For it must be remembered, though this of course is never even hinted, exactly the same means which the two sheikhs employ to achieve their ends with their present suzerains could be used with equal effect against ourselves, and I regret to have to state that, in my opinion, I do not think Sheikh Mubarek would have the slightest hesitation in concerting any such move if he thought he had the least chance of obtaining a successful issue.

[42411] No. 105.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir F. Bertie.

(No. 477.)

Sir, *Foreign Office, November* 29, 1909.

I TRANSMIT to your Excellency herewith copy of a letter which I have received from the Euxine and Marmora British Development Syndicate,* respecting a proposal to obtain a concession from the Turkish Government for the construction of a railway from Samsoun to Sivas.

I request your Excellency to ascertain and report to me whether the French Government propose to give their official support in this matter to the group headed by M. Perchot, as is stated in the syndicate's letter to be the case. His Majesty's Government are disposed to give the syndicate the support they require, provided that there is no objection on the part of the Russian Government, who have preferential rights for the construction of railways in that part of Asia Minor.

I am, &c.

E. GREY.

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* No. 88.

[42411] No. 106.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir A. Nicolson.

(No. 309.)

Foreign Office, November 29, 1909.

Sir,

I TRANSMIT to your Excellency herewith copy of a letter which I have received from the Euxine and Marmora British Development Syndicate,* respecting a proposal to obtain, in co-operation with French and Russian capitalists, a concession from the Turkish Government for the construction of a railway from Samsoun to Sivas.

I request your Excellency to ascertain and to report to me whether the Russian Government propose to give their official support to the group represented by Rossolats Bey, and, if so, whether they would have any objection to the proposed co-operation of a British syndicate in the construction of a railway over which Russia has preferential rights. If there should be no objection on the part of the Russian Government, His Majesty's Government are disposed to support the Euxine and Marmora Syndicate in this matter.

I am, &c.

E. GREY.

[42411] No. 107.

Foreign Office to the Euxine and Marmora British Development Syndicate.

Foreign Office, November 29, 1909.

Gentlemen,

I AM directed by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 18th instant respecting a concession for the construction of the Samsoun to Sivas Railway, and to state that the matter will receive consideration.

With regard to the statement that you are still awaiting the decision of the Secretary of State as to whether His Majesty's Government will support you in applying for this concession, I am to point out that in a conversation between Mr. Mallet and Mr. Clifford Beckett, the representative of your syndicate, on the 27th ultimo, that gentleman was informed that this application could not be supported so long as the Russian preferential rights for railway construction in Northern Asia Minor existed, but that if co-operation could be arranged between your syndicate and the Russian and French groups, and if the Russian Government decided to support such a combination, then His Majesty's Government might be disposed to give you official assistance in this undertaking.

I am, &c.

LOUIS MALLET.

4008] No. 108.

Euphrates and Tigris Steam Navigation Company to Foreign Office.—(Received December 2.)

3, *Salter's Hall Court, Cannon Street, London, December* 1, 1909.

Sir,

WITH reference to Mr. Lynch's memorandum of the 4th ultimo on Mr. Marling's telegram of the 2nd instant, and especially to the passage contained on pp. 2 and 3, "I must also point out that if the British Government and ourselves were to give a formal annulment . . . . . will be considerably weakened," we understand from Colonel Picot that the Turkish Government lays special stress on the formal annulment of the rights of the present British company. You will observe that such annulment forms no part of convention "C" which has all along been under negotiations. Mr. Cave, K.C., advised us during the autumn (in the absence of Mr. Hamilton, K.C., upon his annual holiday) that if the Turkish Government were to demand such annulment it would be essential to introduce a safeguard to the effect that complete annulment should become operative only when the new company had been placed in full possession of all its rights under the convention. Colonel Picot reports that the Porte will not accept this safeguard. In Mr. Lynch's memorandum, cited above,

* No. 86.

Mr. Lynch agreed that if His Majesty's Government considered that in spite of formal annulment, even without Mr. Cave's safeguard, it would be open to them to insist upon a restoration of the *status quo ante* in cases of non-fulfilment by the Turkish Government of their obligations under the Convention, he would acquiesce in this view. We have now consulted Mr. Hamilton, K.C., upon the point, and we enclose his opinion. As the matter is of vital importance to ourselves, I have the honour to enquire whether His Majesty's Government concur in the opinion expressed by Mr. Hamilton, K.C., especially as regards *restitutio in integrum*, in which case we should be enabled to meet the wish of the Turkish Government and to agree to the insertion of the annulment clause. I should add that the Turkish Government insist that the deed of annulment should be countersigned by His Majesty's Government.

I have, &c.

(For Secretary),

THOS. H. ROBERTS.

Inclosure in No. 108.

Opinion of Mr. Hamilton respecting the Euphrates and Tigris Steam Navigation Company.

WITH regard to the proposed amalgamation of a part of the undertaking of the Euphrates and Tigris Steam Navigation Company with the Ottoman Company "Hamidieh," by means of the formation of a new Ottoman company upon the terms of the draft convention submitted to me, with the addition of a clause annulling the privileges of the British company appended hereto, I have been requested to advise what would be the equitable remedy to which the English company would be entitled if the Turkish Government for any reason withdrew or failed to uphold the proposed concession.

I am of opinion that if the event should take place within the next few years there would be substantially a total failure of consideration which in equity would entitle the English company to a *restitutio in integrum*, or at its option to receive full compensation for the loss of the monopoly granted by the concession, as well as any other damages that company might thereby sustain. If the event took place subsequently, the English company would still be entitled to the remedy of a *restitutio in integrum* if the Ottoman Government and the English company could be restored to their original position, or, at the option of the English company, to compensation and damages. If, however, the parties could not be replaced in their original positions, the only remedy, in my opinion, would be compensation in damages

The remedy by way of *restitutio in integrum* would entitle the English company to a regrant of its present privileges, and would include any loss the English company might have sustained by reason of the subscription and payment for shares in the new company, as well as for the loss of the profits which the English company might have made if the amalgamation had not taken place.

WILLIAM F. HAMILTON.

Lincoln's Inn, November 29, 1909.

[44001] No. 109.

The Euphrates and Tigris Steam Navigation Company to Foreign Office.—(Received December 2.)

3, *Salters' Hall Court, Cannon Street, London, December* 1, 1909.

Sir,

WITH reference to my letter of this date, enclosing copy of an opinion by Mr. Hamilton, K.C., I have the honour to enclose herewith a copy of the clause referred to in that opinion, and which should have been appended thereto.

I have, &c.

H. W. MACLEAN, *Secretary.*

Inclosure in No. 109.

Clause extracted from Opinion of Mr. Hamilton, K.C.

THE privileges accorded to Mr. Lynch by the Imperial Government and exploited by the vessels of the Euphrates and Tigris Steam Navigation Company (Limited), which actually perform the navigation service on the Tigris, shall be completely annulled upon the promulgation of the Imperial firman confirming these presents and upon the completion of the official transfer to the society of the rights, privileges, and property to be brought into *apport* by the Ottoman Government in accordance with article 8.

In confirmation of this limitation the concessionnaire must obtain from Mr. Lynch a declaration to the above effect, confirmed by the English authorities, and hand same to the Minister of Public Works at the time of exchange of signatures to the convention, the "cahier des charges," and the statutes.

[41732] No. 110.

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. Marling.

(No. 370.)

Sir, *Foreign Office, December 4, 1909.*

I HAVE received your despatches Nos. 895 and 902 of the 9th and 13th ultimo respecting the return of certain Chaldean Roman Catholics to the Nestorian Church, and I approve the instructions which, as reported in the former of the above-mentioned despatches, you were sending to the British vice-consul at Mosul.

I am, &c.

E. GREY.

[44346] No. 111.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 6.)

(No. 921.)

Sir, *Constantinople, November 20, 1909.*

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith a despatch from His Majesty's consul-general at Beirout, giving an account of the tour he has just made in the Lebanon.

I have, &c.

CHARLES M. MARLING.

Inclosure in No. 111.

Consul-General Cumberbatch to Mr. Marling.

(No. 72. Confidential.)

Sir, *Beirout, November 5, 1909.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 51 of the 7th July, I have the honour to report that, in accordance with the sanction conveyed in Sir G. Lowther's telegram of the 30th August, I made a tour in Mount Lebanon, starting in September and ending in October. I was accompanied by Mr. Esper Effendi Shoucair, dragoman of this consulate-general, whose extensive knowledge of the Lebanon and its various sects is possessed by few others, and I now beg leave to submit an account of my journey, which I think may be of interest, the route followed by me being clearly indicated in the map attached to the report of my predecessor on Mount Lebanon, forwarded to the Foreign Office in the embassy despatch No. 165 of the 5th May, 1900, and printed in July (Confidential, 7361).

I first went to Beiteddin to pay a long-deferred visit, at his summer head-quarters, to his Excellency Youssouf Pasha, Governor-General of the Lebanon, and on the way I spent a night at Baroukh as the guest of Mustapha Bey Amad (Druze), president of the Criminal Court of Appeal, and was able to investigate on the spot a grave dispute between the Amads and the Djumblatts as to rights over the water of the River Baroukh, which had been privately submitted to me for amicable settlement.

At Beiteddin I was received by Emin Kabelan Bellama (Maronite), vice-president of the Administrative Council, and his colleagues, in the absence of Youssouf Pasha, who was detained at Aley by the news of his brother's death, and a lunch was given, to which all the chief functionaries were invited. After returning the calls of the officials, I proceeded to Bakleen, the summer official residence of the Kaimakam of the Shouf, the most important Druze official, and I paid a visit to the kaimakam, Emir Chekib Arslan (cousin of the late Emir Mehemed Arslan, the murdered deputy), and to the officials of that district. I also called on one of the two sheikh akals (religious Druze heads), and I inspected the hospital of the Lebanon and Palestine Nurses' Mission and the newly opened reading-room of a young men's literary club, of which there are several in the Mountain, the propelling power behind them being British or American Missions.

On the way to Muktarah I called on the second sheikh akal, who, like his colleague, received me in a most cordial manner.

At Muktarah, the picturesquely situated mansion of Nessib Bey (head of the important Djumblatt clan), his nephew, Fuad Bey, did the honours of the house, renowned for its hospitality, and where many Druze notables had congregated to meet me.

On the road to Djezzin I was entertained at lunch by the learned Sheikh Said Hamdan, member of the Civil Court of Appeal, and the religious judge of the Druzes, whose assistance I needed in settling two or three questions that had been submitted to me.

At Djezzin I was the guest of the kaimakam, Selim Bey Nazif (Maronite), with whom I spent a day, during which I visited officials and notables. At Hebalieh, near Sidon, I visited Nessib Bey Djumblatt in his fine residence near the sea.

Between these visits to Muktarah, to the two sheikh akals, to Sheikh Said Hamdan and to Nessib Beys, I must have met every Druze worth knowing and, to judge from their manner of greeting me, I have reason to believe that my visit among them was appreciated.

I returned to Beirout for a few days, and then started for the four northern districts of Metn, Kesroman, Batroun, and Koura, halting, either for a short rest or for the night, at the following places:—

Homana, the centre of an important silk and vine district.

Schweir, a station of the Church of Scotland Mission (which I inspected); a favourite summer resort of Egyptian officials, and a stronghold of freemasonry.

Bezkinta, a rich agricultural centre.

Meirouba, prettily situated in a very well watered and fertile valley.

Akoura, inhabited by perhaps the hardiest people of the Lebanon.

Laklouk Pass, a favourite Bedouin encampment.

Diman, the summer residence of the Maronite patriarch, Mgr. Hoyek, in the Kadisha Valley.

His Beatitude gave a lunch in my honour, and I had a long private interview with him afterwards to discuss several questions.

Bisherri, reputed to have supplied the greatest number of emigrants, the most favoured British colonies being New Zealand and Queensland.

The famous cedars of Lebanon being only an hour's ride from Bisherri I rode up to them. There are over 400 of them still standing, twelve being exceedingly old, to judge from their general appearance. They are enclosed by a wall, and a keeper is stationed there to prevent damage by travellers and others—a very necessary precaution.

Edhen, where I enjoyed the hospitality of the Kaimakam of Batroun, Selim Bey Kuram (Maronite), nephew of the famous chieftain, Joseph Karam, whose adventurous exploits ended in his deportation to Constantinople some forty-five years ago.

Tripoli (Beirout vilayet), where I spent a day in accordance with the Foreign Office sanction conveyed in No. 9, Consular, of the 5th November, 1909, in connection with the nomination of a new British vice-consul (and dragoman), which matter has been dealt with in a separate despatch.

Amioun, the summer residence of the Kaimakam of Koura, Milhem Bey Khouri (Greek Catholic).

Beshmedzin, a centre of olive cultivation, where I was hospitably entertained by the leading Greek Orthodox notable, Assad Haik.

Batroun, where the Mudir Ibrahim Bey Akil (an intimate friend of the Maronite patriarch) showed me every attention.

Djebail and *Djouni*, ports of the Lebanon, where, as at Batroun, I found people considerably excited over the latest decision of the Sublime Porte regarding the opening of these ports to steamers.

Though my tour was in no way official, and the governor-general had issued no instructions of any sort as to the reception to be accorded to me, I was throughout my journey the recipient of the greatest attentions on the part of the officials, high and low, the clergy and the people. The demonstrations of the Maronites in some places, such as Djezzin and Bisherri, surpassed, if anything, the boisterous manifestations of the Druzes, and were remarked upon as something unusual in the case of a British consul-general travelling outside the limits of the Shouf and other Druze localities.

The courteous and ceremonious attentions of the officials may be put down to the excellent relations existing between this consulate-general and the Central Government, as well as with the French and Russian consulates-general and the Maronite patriarchate, but the spontaneous and friendly ovations on the part of the villagers and townspeople was, I think, due to a greater sense of freedom discernible since the revival of the constitution in the expression of their long-felt sympathy and respect for the nation, whose flag flies in such close proximity in Cyprus and Egypt, and whose civilising influence in those portions of the Ottoman Empire they have been able to appreciate. Returning emigrants also are loud in their eulogies of the just form of government obtaining in British colonies, and Syrians in the service of the Egyptian and Soudanese Governments add their tribute of praise whenever they have the chance.

In every village and town I was received with every ceremony by the mudir or kaïmakam and by the clergy, and in many places I was entertained at lunch or dinner, to which the notables of the locality were invited in order to meet me and discuss topics of local or general interest in a friendly manner. The inevitable addresses and speeches were invariably couched in most friendly and eulogistic language towards His Majesty the King and the British Government, and one could not help thinking that it was all probably prompted by a vision of possible foreign intervention in Syria, sooner or later, in case of further revolutionary movements in Turkey, and that it was covertly intended to make me understand that if the mandate was to fall on England's shoulders she would be welcome.

Though my experience of Syria is comparatively short, I believe I am right in saying that every Lebanese, like every Syrian Christian, is a "Separatist" at heart, and would gladly join any disintegrating movement leading, as they would hope, towards an European Protectorate over the Mountain, which, they think is much more likely to lead to a betterment of their present condition than a continuation of their actual semi-autonomous but restricted status under constitutional government as understood by the Mussulman majority predominating at Constantinople.

The unfriendly attitude taken up by the Sublime Porte in the question of the Lebanese ports is a case in point. It was the subject of many conversations during my tour, and I had some difficulty in calming the minds of people in the three ports affected, where committees were organising hostile demonstrations under the influence of racial animosity towards the local authorities of Beirout, whom they hold primarily responsible for supporting the association of Mussulman boatmen and lightermen in their interested endeavours to prevent any development of the business in the Lebanese ports.

In my humble opinion, the action of the Government at Constantinople is unwise, and in private interviews with the Governor-General of the Beirout vilayet and two of the local Members of Parliament, I have essayed to convince them of the advisability of contenting the Lebanese when, encouraged by the principles enounced by the leading politicians at Constantinople, they put forward reasonable claims such as these, with a view to bettering the economic position of the province.

The Lebanon occupies a position which, with certain obvious modifications, might usefully serve as a model for that section of the Liberal party led by Ismail Kemal Bey, who were credited with the idea of introducing a system of local self-government. This favoured position the Lebanese will never willingly forgo, notwithstanding the persistent efforts of the Committee of Union and Progress to convert them by sending orators such as Djemal Bey, of Salonica, to address public meetings, and to instill into the minds of officials in the neighbouring vilayets the necessity of keeping a close watch on the doings of the governor-general of the Lebanon and his kaïmakams. In this connection the following paragraph at the end of an article in the "Tanine" on Syrian Arabs is as significant as it is unfounded ("Levant Herald," 26th October, 1909): "Dans le Liban on remarque des tendances de plus en plus prononcées pour

un rapprochement avec l'ottomanisme. Le comité y compte aujourd'hui plus de 1,500 membres."

Many other questions of local interest were freely discussed, and enabled me to acquire a better knowledge of the people's occupations and mode of life.

A question then, and still, agitating the country was the newly established fee for certificates of registration ("nufus teskerehs"), to which I have alluded in my last quarterly Confidential report.

Remarks as to the apparent want of occupation, especially among the better classes, were invariably met with allusions to the retrocession, or rather non-inclusion, of the fertile valleys of the Bekaa, when the first "règlement" was drawn up (1861), whereby the agricultural abilities of the Lebanese were restricted to their mountain territory, where it must be admitted wonders have been accomplished in the transformation of rocky ground into terraces piled up with fertile soil and planted with vines or wheat.

It is calculated that when the inevitable revision of the cadastre takes place, it will be found that the area under cultivation in 1860 has considerably increased through the industry of the people, especially of the Christian sects, and the sight of the extensive olive groves in the lowlands, the mulberry plantations all over the mountain, and the vineyards in the higher latitudes, supports that conjecture.

In answer to the complaints of confinement within such narrow territorial limits, it was suggested by me that when security to life and property shall have been established in the neighbouring vilayet of Damascus these would be inducements for the Lebanese agriculturists to extend their energies, not only into those coveted districts, where there are already thirteen villages inhabited entirely by Lebanese, but further afield, *e.g.*, Mesopotamia, when the irrigation works are completed and the land about to be opened out by the projected Bagdad Railway.

Another standard that may be adopted for establishing the general prosperity of the people in the Lebanon is the steady increase in the number of houses with tiled roofs in the place of the old-fashioned flat terrace, which is gradually disappearing altogether, so that it is rare to see a village where there are not two or three bright red-tiled roofs standing out in strong contrast to the sombre-coloured terraced roofs, which in many of the flourishing towns have entirely disappeared.

The Lebanese would seem to have a decided weakness for building, and in many instances, where his funds have run short when half-way through, he has returned abroad to resume work till he has amassed sufficient to complete his new home.

Most of my journey having been made by carriage, I was able to testify to the excellent state of repair in which the roads are maintained all over the Mountain, with very few exceptions. The rate of construction has been about 57 miles per annum, bringing up the total constructed and in course of construction from 425 miles in 1899 to about 1,000 miles in 1909. When compared with the roads in other parts of the Empire, and when the mountainous character of the district is taken into consideration, the above state of things is very satisfactory, and it only needs the repairing of the long-abandoned road to Damascus, which traverses the Mountain in the middle, to open up the greater part of the Lebanon to motor-car traffic, which will be an additional local attraction for tourists, who will be enabled to see some very fine mountain scenery and a most interesting country.

On the whole, the Lebanon itself is quiet and contented, with the exception of parties whose rivals are in office, and who consequently criticise everything adversely as a matter of course. But what was most gratifying to hear on all sides were the expressions of respect and friendliness for the British nation, which were, I am credibly assured, not mere words of flattery.

I have, &c.
H. A. CUMBERBATCH.

[44347] No. 112.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 6.)

(No. 931.)

Sir, *Constantinople, December 1, 1909.*

MR. NICHOLL, Mr. W. K. D'Arcy's representative in this capital, has called several times of late at this embassy to complain of the delay of the Turkish Government in coming to a decision respecting the grant of a concession for the exploitation of the Mosul and Bagdad petroleum fields, and at his request I have twice mentioned the

matter to the Grand Vizier. Hilmi Pasha, who professes to be friendly to the D'Arcy proposals, admitted at once that Mr. Nicholl is being hardly treated, but said that the Government could take no decision until the question of the concession for the railway from Yumurtalik to Mosul and Kirkuk, with mining rights along its route, had been disposed of. (This is, as you are aware, the project first originated by Mr. Glasgow, and a statement of the actual position of the scheme will be found in Mr. Weakley's memorandum enclosed in my despatch No. 929 of the 22nd November.) The Government, his Highness said, regretted the position, but their hands were tied by the decision of the Senate taken last August, which instructed the Ministry to examine the scheme with a view to granting a concession for it; and therefore, until the project had been definitely rejected, it was impossible to come to any settlement with Mr. Nicholl. In answer to a further question of mine, the Grand Vizier assured me that there was no intention to put up the concession for "adjudication." In reply to a further question of mine, Hilmi Pasha stated also that in his opinion the Anatolian Railway Company's claim to an option for the petroleum rights in these districts was untenable, and Aristidi Pasha, Minister of Mines and Forests, has expressed himself to me emphatically in the same sense. Mr. D'Arcy's representative here is quite positive that, whatever they may have been, the German rights to the petroleum concession have entirely lapsed; but, on the other hand, Dr. Gwinner has expressed himself to Mr. Edwin Whittall with equal certitude in the opposite sense; it has therefore seemed to me worth while to try to ascertain what are the real facts of the case. Unfortunately the records in the archives of the embassy are anything but conclusive, and the following brief sketch is based on information derived from Mr. Nicholl, the references to despatches from the embassy merely denoting that an allusion to any particular event will be found in the report referred to.

On the 16th July, 1904, an agreement was signed (copy enclosed in Mr. Townley's despatch No. 837 of the 28th October, 1908), between Dr. Gwinner and the Civil List, which provided that the Anatolian Railway Company should send a technical commission to examine the petroleum fields in the Mosul and Baghdad vilayets, and should, in the event of the commission's report proving favourable, conclude a convention for the creation of a company to exploit them, the option being open for one year, a period subsequently to be extended to two years. The commission, which, according to Mr. Nicholl, was in reality composed almost entirely of railway engineers, and in no sense an expert body, returned in the summer of 1905 (Sir N. O'Conor's No. 563 of the 6th August, 1905), but sent in no report except some notes furnished to them by a German mining engineer in the service of the Civil List, nor did the Anatolian railway company make any proposals for the formation of a company as provided in the agreement of 1904. Early in the following year (Sir N. O'Conor's No. 184 of the 20th March, 1906), however, the Civil List, being in want of money, invited the railway company to take up the option on precisely the terms then submitted by Mr. D'Arcy, but the Germans declined the offer, either because they had not the requisite capital, as Mr. Nicholl asserts, or, as seems to appear from Sir N. O'Conor's account, because they believed that their rights of either option or preference were perfectly secured to them. According to Mr. Nicholl's contention, by refusing this offer the Germans lost their right of preference on equal terms conferred by the last article of the 1904 agreement, nor did they, he asserts, keep alive their right of option by themselves making any proposition for the formation of a company to acquire this concession definitely; but this latter point is, I understand, denied by Dr. Gwinner.

The two years of the option having expired, the Civil List informed the railway company that their rights had lapsed, to which Dr. Gwinner at once replied by a formal protest stating that the company had made proposals for the formation of a company (I cannot ascertain the date of the alleged steps) and that the Civil List had taken no notice of it, so that as the failure to form a company was attributable to the Civil List, not to the German company, the latter still possessed its right of option.

The issue would thus appear to hang in great measure on a point of fact, namely, whether the Anatolian Railway did or did not within the two years specified approach the Civil List with proposals to form a concessionnaire company, and on this point the only evidence, and that very inconclusive, that I can find in the embassy's archives is Selim Pasha's letter to Sir H. D. Wolff (enclosure in your despatch to Sir N. O'Conor's No. 231 of the 14th June, 1907), which states that the firman in favour of the Germans was still in force; but it must be remembered that Selim was Minister of Mines and at that time the petroleum fields of the two vilayets belonged to the Ministry of the Civil List.

As to the probabilities of a general character, it may be said that it seems most unlikely that Mr. D'Arcy would be maintaining an agent here for the purpose of obtaining the concession if he knew that another party had prior rights to that concession; but then again it is equally hard to believe that a keen and business man like Dr. Gwinner should have neglected to preserve the German company's preference rights to so valuable a property.

We are, however, still in the dark as to the German version of the story of the 1904 agreement and its sequel, and I shall endeavour to obtain more detailed and accurate information on the subject.

I have, &c.
CHARLES M. MARLING.

[44348] No. 113.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 6.)

(No. 936.)

Sir, *Pera, November 29, 1909.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 910 of the 16th November last and to your despatch No. 351 of the 12th instant, which crossed it in the post, I have the honour to report that I have made further enquiries among my colleagues here as to any further action which it is proposed to take in connection with the claims of foreign subjects arising out of the recent disturbance at Adana.

The German, French, Italian, and United States Embassies have all at various times sent in notes to the Sublime Porte demanding compensation for losses suffered by their subjects during the troubles in principle, and in some instances sending in lists of claims. In each case the Porte has answered disclaiming responsibility, pointing out that there had been *force majeure*, that the officials had done all their duty, &c., and advising foreign claimants to bring their individual cases into the law courts.

The Embassies are now referring to their Governments for further instructions, but do not seem at all disposed to let the matter rest here; the United States Embassy have sent in a fresh note maintaining their point of view, while awaiting definite instructions from Washington; the Italian Embassy adopt the view that the Turkish Government cannot possibly deny responsibility for the losses sustained, seeing that they have condemned the vali for his share of responsibility, and that there is plenty of evidence to show that the soldiers themselves were incriminated in the pillaging and incendiarism, and they are inclined to suggest that when the Porte has rejected all claims raised it would be advisable for all the Powers to unite in making strong representations. Meanwhile, the French Government are, I understand, proposing arbitration, and suggesting that French and Turkish delegates should examine and decide on each case on its merits.

In these circumstances, I would be glad to receive your instructions as to whether you consider it to be advisable that this Embassy should send in a list of claims to the Sublime Porte in the event of any further concerted action being ultimately decided upon by the Powers.

I have, &c.
CHARLES M. MARLING.

[44352] No. 114.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 6.)

(No. 940.)

Sir, *Constantinople, November 30, 1909.*

THE campaign in the press against the "affaire Lynch," as it is called, the lead in which has been taken by the "Yeni Gazeta," and which is organised by Sassoon Effendi, the Jewish deputy for Baghdad, who accompanied the parliamentary deputation to England last July, has grown greatly in violence of late, and public interest has been aroused to such a pitch that the Government thought it necessary to call a meeting of its supporters last week to explain the true state of affairs to them and assure itself of their confidence. The question, indeed, has become one of Cabinet importance.

Sassoon Effendi, as also certain unofficial German agents in Constantinople and

elsewhere, have been zealously spreading among the ignorant Arab and Anatolian deputies the idea that the monopoly of the navigation of the two rivers is a first step in the English political and territorial designs in Mesopotamia; they have been loudly asserting that any monopoly is contrary to British economic principles, and that, if granted, this particular monopoly will be prejudicial not only to the private interests of Bagdad merchants, but also to the general development of those regions. Another strong point of attack is that the Government has no right to make any agreement of the kind contemplated without first submitting it to Parliament. Though the "Tanin," the official organ of the Government party, and the "Tazvir-i-Efkiar" have both rebutted these assertions, the campaign has been by no means unsuccessful, and has led to a formidable opposition "bloc," which is causing no little anxiety to the Grand Vizier and to the Committee party in the Chamber.

The Cabinet intend to uphold the proposed fusion as being consonant with the interests of the country, and while they deny that there is any necessity to submit the arrangement for parliamentary sanction, they profess themselves to be quite prepared to meet the interpellation which has been fixed for the 11th proximo.

There are also indications that the Government is disposed to make this a test case to assert their right to conclude transactions of this nature without the interference of Parliament, as they foresee and appreciate the difficulty of dealing with business connected with the development of the Empire, if questions of the nature of the present one are to be blocked indefinitely by the delays inseparable from discussion in an inexperienced assembly such as the present Ottoman Chamber of Deputies.

I have, &c.
CHARLES M. MARLING.

[44354] No. 115.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(*Received December 6.*)

(No. 962.)

Pera, December 1, 1909.

Sir,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 913 of the 16th November last, I have the honour to report that I have received a further despatch from His Majesty's consul at Erzeroum announcing the return on the 25th October last of the governor-general, Jelal Bey, from his journey into the Bayazid sanjak to enquire into the complaints brought by Kurds and Christians of the district against the notorious Hussein Pasha of Patnotz for his depredations and acts of violence. The governor-general has convinced himself of the ruinous effect on the country of the policy which the old régime followed of giving these Kurdish chiefs unrestricted powers, and he found that law had become a dead letter in the land. He intends asking the Government to allow him to take strong measures now to make these chiefs and their followers amenable to the laws. Unfortunately, as regards Hussein Pasha himself, all the grievances brought against him related to a period previous to the restoration of the constitution, but Jelal Bey will compel him to refund several thousand liras of the taxes which he had collected on his own account, and has already reinstated some Kurds in their properties from which he had flagrantly ousted them; he hopes to restore more land in the spring, but considers it will be first necessary to have a careful cadastral survey made of the lands in dispute. All the proposed measures can only be carried through if he has steady support from the Central Government. Meanwhile, the district is enjoying a good and peaceful administration, the authorities doing all they can to avoid any friction between Christians and Moslems, and to ensure the protection of the lives and property of the former. Even the Armenians express themselves as satisfied, and only desire an improvement in the economic condition of the country and the restitution of lands seized during the old régime. Their claims under this head are supported by the Gregorian Bishop of Erzeroum, Mgr. Sempad, a man who is respected by Moslems and Christians alike, and who is known for his moderate and conciliatory views. He has just returned from a tour of the Bayazid and Khinis districts, and the Government would do well to show some signs of taking his views and demands into consideration.

The detachment of troops sent from Van, as reported in my above-referred to despatch, to punish certain Kurdish brigands in the neighbourhood of Sirt, though ordered to winter at Mamhoran in the Bitlis district, reappeared at Van on the 14th November, and being chiefly reservists, were forthwith disbanded, and the cause of their disobedience is being investigated. It appears that their commander, Lieutenant-Colonel Fehim Bey, has some grudge against the Acting Ferik of Van, Lieutenant-

Colonel Fuad Bey, and may have merely wished to flout his orders; declared that he had not sufficient provisions; that, having captured six brigands, including Suleiman Agha, his mission was concluded, and that his reservist troops naturally preferred to winter at home.

The convocation of various neighbouring Kurdish chiefs to Van to attend a conference by Sheikh Abdul Kadir, on the advice of the Vali of Van (see my above-mentioned despatch) has broken up, and the greater number of the chiefs have returned home again. All the important Kurds of the vicinity attended the conference, with the exception of Hussein Pasha and Shakir Pasha. At the first meeting on the 1st November, the Kurds and Armenians swore friendship and mutual assistance, and at the last meeting some ten days later a declaration was passed to the effect that the maintenance of the constitutional régime depends on the union of all the elements in the country. The following resolutions were also passed:—

1. The Kurds promise to live on friendly terms with their Armenian brethren, to work for the union of all, and to help the Government to punish evil-doers.

2. An engagement was made to settle the question of the ownership of land claimed by Armenians, the Kurds undertaking to hand over next spring all lands now in their possession of which Armenians hold and produce the "tapu" (title-deeds); where no such "tapu" can be produced the question is to be left for the Government's decision.

3. United efforts are to be made for the establishment of further industries in the vilayet, for the spread of education, and the opening of schools in the villages.

The agreement was signed by thirty-three Kurds and twelve Armenian notables, among the latter the acting bishop; but the Armenians are on the whole sceptical of the results of this conference, considering that it was unnecessary to summon the Kurdish chiefs; that by doing so the Government are practically recognising their authority in a matter which the Government should settle alone; that they are thus giving new life to the chiefs' power over their tribesmen, which had been diminishing since the constitution; and that the only argument which has any lasting weight with them is that of force.

The district of Diarbekir is reported to be in a state of uncertainty and restlessness, but for no very apparent reason, except as a result of the Government's policy in regard to their legal appointments; of the six Moslem and the six Christian members of the local courts, all but one Christian had been suspended in anticipation of their transference elsewhere; the courts are closed and no legal business is being done. The remaining member, Hanna Nejmi Effendi by name, has anything but a good reputation, and people are asking themselves why he should be singled out for confirmation in his post with an increase of salary; the Moslem dismissed members, who are all ex-chefs of the town, declare that they will refuse to accept any move, and will probably remain at Diarbekir in order to promote further discontent there, while two Christians have been lately appointed to the courts at Van and Bitlis at a salary of 1,500 piastres a-month, who were greatly discredited already in the days of the old régime. The prospects of reform in the law courts seem therefore very remote, but the vali makes small count of any criticisms of these appointments, and adopts an optimistic attitude with regard to the future. The people do not share his optimism, however, and there is an uncomfortable feeling abroad which manifests itself in a general falling off of business in the merchants holding back and few and small orders being given.

As reported in my despatch No. 913, the Vali of Mosul, Mohamed Fazil Pasha Daghestani, returned there on the 31st October after an absence of two and a-half months, during which period he has been carrying on a punitive expedition against a certain Sheikh Barzani near Aera. The expedition has not been very successful, having cost several thousands of pounds, and ended in the vali returning without the sheikh, and with only some hundreds of head of cattle and a few Kurdish prisoners, mostly women; between forty and sixty villages have been devastated in the Aera country, and the troops have returned very much worn out. In justice to the sheikh, it must be said that he is considered to be one of the best of his class, quiet and well disposed towards the Christians; the cause of the expedition sent against him appears to be that he was engaged in a personal quarrel with his neighbour Osman Agha, a friend of Sabonji Pasha, who contrived to win over the new kaimakam of Aera to their side; on his arrival at Aera the kaimakam accordingly began sending in reports of Barzani's disturbing influences in the country and menaces on Aera itself; Sabonji,

who is a member of the administrative council, corroborated these reports, and sent information to Constantinople that Barzani had repudiated the present Government as being controlled by Salonica Jews, whereupon the new vali, on arriving in his district three months ago, was ordered to undertake this expedition, leaving the far more annoying raids of the Hamavends unpunished and the internal affairs of the vilayet neglected.

From the Bagdad vilayet reports reach me of fresh Arab raids along the Euphrates, and His Majesty's consul fears that more Arab attacks may be expected on passing steamers; there is considerable unrest among the tribes along the rivers, and a tendency to demand a form of autonomy such as they believe to exist in the Yemen; the Nejd is the centre of this agitation.

The Vali of Bagdad, Shevket Pasha, has his hands more than full, combining the duties of vali and of commander of the VIth Army Corps; he is not capable of fulfilling either adequately, having no experience of civil administration, being much overworked and complaining of having no assistance of any kind among his subordinates. He is, however, to be relieved within the next few weeks by Nazim Pasha, the question of whose appointment as Minister of War brought about the fall of Kiamil Pasha a year ago. Nazim Pasha is a man of strong character, and has stipulated that if he goes to Bagdad he shall be entrusted with the fullest powers.

I have, &c.
CHARLES M. MARLING.

[44808] No. 116.

Board of Trade to Foreign Office.—(Received December 9.)

Board of Trade, December 8, 1909.

Sir,

WITH reference to your letter of the 26th November, with enclosures on the subject of oil concessions in Mesopotamia, I am directed by the Board of Trade to state that they concur in the terms of the communication which Sir E. Grey proposes to address to Mr. Harmsworth.

I am, &c.
G. R. ASKWITH.

[44844] No. 117.

Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 9.)

(No. 506.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *St. Petersburgh, December* 9, 1909.

RAILWAY from Samsun to Sivas.

Your despatch No. 309 of the 29th November. I spoke to M. Isvolsky on this subject, and His Excellency seems to have no knowledge of the scheme, nor does he know anything of Rossolato Bey. He promised, however, that he would enquire into the matter and inform me fully of the result of his enquiry.

[44847] No. 118.

Mr. Carnegie to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 10.)

(No. 478.)
Paris, December 9, 1909.

Sir,

ON receipt of your despatch No. 477 of the 29th ultimo, Sir Francis Bertie communicated to M. Pichon a memorandum in which he informed him of the proposal put forward by the Euxine and Marmora British Development Syndicate to obtain a concession from the Turkish Government for the construction of a railway from Samsoun to Sivas, and enquired whether the French Government proposed to give their official support to the group headed by M. Perchot, which, the syndicate stated, was prepared to co-operate with it and with a Russian group in obtaining concessions for public works in Turkey.

I have the honour to transmit to you herewith copy of M. Pichon's reply, in which he states that the combination in question is meeting with opposition from various other establishments, who have also put forward applications for concessions. The

French Embassy at Constantinople has hitherto not intervened in favour of any one of these financial groups, and it has abstained from taking any action which might seem to favour one group at the expense of others.

M. Pichon adds that, since Russia has a preferential right for the construction of lines in the district through which the projected railway from Samsoun to Sivas will pass, the matter is one with which the Russian Embassy at Constantinople rather than the French Embassy will deal.

I have, &c.
L. D. CARNEGIE.

Inclosure in No. 118.

Note communicated to Sir F. Bertie by M. Pichon.

LE Ministre des Affaires Étrangères a pris connaissance des indications contenues dans la note de l'Ambassade d'Angleterre du 1er décembre, relative à une combinaison financière dans laquelle seraient représentés des éléments anglais, français, et russes, et qui aurait pour but de s'assurer la concession de la construction du chemin de fer Samsoun–Siwas et des lignes annexes.

D'après les renseignements qui ont été fournis à M. Pichon, l'entente formée par M. Perchot avec les deux autres groupes russes et anglais visés dans la note précitée aurait actuellement à lutter contre d'autres demandes de concession émanant de divers établissements ou personnalités financières qui se sont mis également sur les rangs.

L'Ambassade de France à Constantinople, tout en suivant avec sympathie les efforts faits par ses nationaux pour former, en y associant des éléments étrangers, des groupements de capitaux en vue de cette entreprise, n'a pas eu jusqu'à présent à intervenir en faveur de l'un d'entre eux, et n'a pu que s'abstenir de faire des démarches qui auraient paru favoriser un groupe au détriment des autres.

Le Ministre des Affaires Étrangères fait observer, à ce propos, que la Russie ayant un droit de préférence sur les lignes à construire dans les régions que va traverser le chemin de fer projeté de Samsoun à Siwas, la question sera traitée à Constantinople par l'Ambassade de Russie plûtot que par celle de France.

Paris, le 7 décembre.

[44008] No. 119.

Foreign Office to Euphrates and Tigris Steam Navigation Company.

Foreign Office, December 10, 1909.

Sir,

I AM directed by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 1st instant respecting the question of the annulment desired by the Turkish Government of the rights of the present British company upon the completion of the transfer to the new company of the rights and property contributed by the Turkish Government in accordance with article 8 of the draft convention. You enquire whether His Majesty's Government concur in the opinion expressed by Mr. W. F. Hamilton, K.C., as to the redress which might be claimed from the Turkish Government in certain contingencies.

I am to state in reply that the question appears to be one of some difficulty, and that if you will prepare, in consultation with your solicitors, a full statement of its material facts and history and of the relief to which you conceive you would be entitled from the Turkish Government, supported by any necessary documents and opinions of counsel, the Secretary of State will be prepared to give it his careful consideration, if necessary in consultation with the Law Officers of the Crown. I am, however, to add that, in the event of your adopting this course, it would be advisable that you should submit such a statement at your earliest convenience, as, in existing circumstances, its consideration, especially should consultation with the Law Officers prove to be necessary, might take some little time.

I am, &c.
W. LANGLEY.

[45104] No. 120.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 11.)

(No. 361.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, December* 11, 1909.

DEBATE on Lynch Concession in Turkish Chamber (see my despatch No. 940 of the 30th November).

The Government maintained their position, but the sitting was an agitated one, and a snap vote was successfully taken against the Cabinet on the general question of bringing concessions before the Chamber. The debate will continue on Monday the 13th, and no definite decision has as yet been arrived at.

The present situation seems to point to the concession being eventually agreed to by the Chamber.

[44348] No. 121.

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. Marling.

(No. 378.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, December* 11, 1909.

WITH reference to your despatch No. 936 of the 29th ultimo enquiring whether a list of the British claims arising out of the Adana massacres should be presented to the Porte, I have to inform you that your attitude in this question should still be governed by the instructions contained in my despatch No. 351 of the 12th November.

I am, &c.
E. GREY.

[45105] No. 122.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 12.)

(No. 362.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, December* 12, 1909.

TELEGRAMS received from Acting Vice-Consul Chafy report hanging of fourteen Moslems on the 9th instant and of eleven more to-day, in connection with the Adana massacres. Disorders are improbable owing to military precautions, but some excitement prevails locally.

[45170] No. 123.

Consul-General Howard to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 13.)

(No. 7. Very Confidential.)
Sir, *Budapest, November* 29, 1909.

I HAVE the honour to inform you that Dr. Nazim Bey, the prominent member of the Committee of Union and Progress, and Riza Tewfik Bey passed through Budapest a few days ago, and had a long and interesting conversation with a friend of mine here, who has been good enough to give me a memorandum of the conversation. He also added a few details by word of mouth.

It appears that Nazim Bey and Riza Tewfik Bey, who, as will be remembered, was the leader of the deputation of Turkish business men who visited Budapest a short time ago, stated that they desired to establish close relations between Turkey and Hungary, since they as Turks, looked upon the Hungarians as "their only brothers in the world."

They said, however, that they distrusted Austria, and were resolved to exclude Austrian commerce as far as possible from Turkey. "Nous ne pensons pas à proclamer un boycott," they said; "mais les Autrichiens sont des canelots; nous ne voulons pas de leurs marchandises." On the other hand, they were most anxious to give all advantages possible to Hungary. They came here with the idea of promoting a "Turkish-Hungarian chamber of commerce" in Budapest and Constantinople. They saw M. de Kossuth and M. Szterényi in connection with this idea but without result, for

they were told that the Hungarian Government was constitutionally debarred from mixing in international affairs.

This answer came as a great disappointment to them. They further told M. de Kossuth that it was not originally intended that the Turkish deputation that came to Hungary a short time ago should also go to Austria. They had originally intended to visit Hungary only, but they were told at the Austro-Hungarian Embassy at Constantinople that unless they went to Vienna there would be no official reception at Budapest. They replied that they had not the money to go to Austria, the subscription of each member of the deputation being limited to 15*l.*, and the reply was that the money would be found. That this was the case is clear from Mr. Theo. Russell's despatch No. 178 of the 2nd November, 1909. M. de Kossuth remarked in regard to this latter matter that he could not help it.

The Turks, after relating this conversation with the Minister of Commerce, added, "Vous êtes plus malheureux que nous autres Turcs. Nous avons toujours notre espoir, mais vous semblez d'en manquer terriblement."

After this the conversation between my informant and the two boys turned to international affairs generally. "These are not a fair game," they complained, "because there are no comprehensible rules." They said they mistrusted British policy. Riza Tewfik particularly seemed to fear British activity in Mesopotamia, and to think Great Britain was beginning to establish a state of things there something akin to that in Egypt in the first days of British activities in that country. He talked of raising the question of Mesopotamia in the House by means of an interpellation. My informant advised him to leave matters alone as Turkey was in great need of sympathy, and it would not help her to provoke hostility. Riza Tewfik said he would think this over.

They further stated that they believed that England was engaged in furthering selfish interests of her own in Crete. She had found Cyprus quite unsuitable as a naval station, and now wanted to get hold of Crete.

I told my informant that any such idea was of course sheer moonshine. No sane man in England would dream of taking Crete. We should hardly have given up the Ionian Islands on account of the difficulties of enforcing a repressive policy there, in order to saddle ourselves with Crete, where such difficulties would be multiplied tenfold. I believed, I said, that Turkey at the end of her occupation had required over 100,000 men to keep order in the island. How was England going to spare an army of occupation like that? The idea was absurd.

I hoped, though I did not say so, that my words might be repeated to Dr. Nazim Bey, or at least to my new Turkish colleague here, Moukhtar Bey, who, I am told, is much in his confidence.

Dr. Nazim Bey further stated that they had proofs that the rebellious Arabian tribes had been armed by British agents—I forgot to ask what was meant by this, whether only merchants or actual Government agents—and that they therefore distrust British action in Arabia also.

They propose to send the deputy of Aidin, Ubeid Ullah, on a mission to Arabia to pacify the Hedjas. He spent many years in exile there and has the reputation of being one of the greatest authorities on Mahommedan religious philosophy. He is looked on as the future Sheikh-ul-Islam. His mission will have a double object: firstly, to persuade the tribes that the reforms contemplated by the Young Turks are not contrary to the rules of the Coran; and, secondly, to strengthen the bond between the partisans of the Imam Yahya and the Caliphate as represented by the Sultan. The two boys seemed particularly anxious about the question of the Caliphate.

Speaking then of the Egyptian national party, they said that these threaten to join the Arabians if the Young Turks were disinclined or unable to help them in their struggle for independence. Nazim Bey had just come from Paris, where he had had conferences with the Young Egypt party with a view to drawing up a plan of action. They had established a central office as a nucleus for the management of Egyptian affairs. At the head of this office is Dr. Osman Ghalib Bey (26, Rue des Boulangers). He is in touch both with the Nationalists in Cairo and with the Young Turk Committee in Salonica, with Sadar Khan, of the Persian Embassy (? at Paris), and with the exponents of the Indian Nationalist movement living in Paris. The first aim of the Young Egyptians is to unite the several factions of Egyptian opposition to the *status quo* in Egypt into one large party, carefully excluding all elements likely to be hostile, whom they suspect of being in British pay. Apparently an active Young Egypt campaign is to be begun shortly.

The boys went on to say that they were much dissatisfied with the Grand Vizier,

Hilmi Pasha, and would like to substitute Talaat Bey for him. They expressed great esteem for Talaat Bey.

As regards Persia, they mentioned that Zil-es-Sultan is entirely dependent or under the influence of a French journalist (Claude Anet), whom they suspect of being in British pay.

Lastly, my informant told me that Nazim Bey gave him the impression of being an entirely earnest, single-minded man, only anxious to carry out the reforms on which he had set his heart, but a dreamer rather than a man of any great intellectual or organising capacity. He (Nazim Bey) feared that the activities of Bulgaria might impede the execution of his favourite reform schemes.

Riza Tewfik, on the other hand, seemed little better than a vain wind-bag.

As regards the proposal of the Committee of Union and Progress above referred to to establish a separate chamber of commerce for Hungary in Constantinople my informant told me that Hungarian commercial and industrial circles had endeavoured to do this in London some time ago. They were dissatisfied with the way in which the Austro-Hungarian Chamber of Commerce in London was managed, believing it to be altogether given over to Austrian interests. Count von Achrenthal had, however, crushed the idea of a separate Hungarian chamber in London at its birth. It may be that the recollection of this incident caused M. de Kossuth and M. Szterényi to give Nazim Bey and Riza Tewfik Bey so little encouragement in the matter of a Hungarian chamber in Constantinople.

Further, as regards Arabian affairs, I may mention here that Professor Vambéry told me the other day that he was greatly surprised at receiving a visit from the son of the Shereef of Mecca, who had apparently been in Vienna also. He seemed much disturbed about stories which had reached him as to British plans for the annexation of Mecca. Professor Vambéry did his best to reassure him on this score.

I beg to apologise for the *pot-pourri* nature of this despatch, but it seemed impossible to treat separately the various subjects which were all mentioned in this conversation.

I have, &c.
ESME HOWARD.

P.S., *December* 1.—The statement of Riza Tewfik regarding his intention to address an interpellation to the Grand Vizier respecting the Mesopotamian concessions is confirmed by a telegram from Constantinople of the 29th ultimo.

This telegram states that the Turkish Chamber passed a resolution to the effect that an interpellation should be addressed to the Grand Vizier, asking him to explain why the Government had sanctioned the concession for the navigation of the Tigris and Euphrates, and why it had not yet submitted to the Chamber the interpellation relating to this matter. The 11th December was fixed as the date by which the interpellation must be answered.

E. H.

[45120] No. 124.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(*Received December* 13.)

(No. 944.)
Sir, *Pera, December* 4, 1909.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 892 of the 8th November last, I have the honour to transmit herewith copy of a further despatch which I have received from His Majesty's vice-consul at Rhodes, dealing with the question of the proposed abolition of the privileges of the Sporades islanders by the Ottoman Government.

I have on several occasions caused enquiries to be made at the Ministry of the Interior as to what are the Government's intentions with regard to the islanders. The Minister at first held out hopes that the islanders would only be called out for military service as "mumzaf," i.e., service for men of over 40 years of age, who are called out only in moments of extreme national emergency, men of from 20 to 30 years of age being thus unaffected. His Excellency now, however, says that the Council of Ministers could not "constitutionally" make such a distinction, and that the islanders must therefore serve like other Ottomans. Owing to the delicate susceptibilities felt by the Turkish authorities just at present with regard to external interference, I have not thought it advisable to press them further officially in the matter for the moment; the fact that many enquiries have been made on the subject will suffice to show that

His Majesty's Government take a benevolent interest in the fate of the islanders without having any desire to interfere in internal affairs.

I may, however, remark that the attitude of the Government in this matter seems scarcely consistent with their apparent disposition to consider the creation of a special régime for the Yemen.

I have, &c.
CHARLES M. MARLING.

Inclosure 1 in No. 124.

Vice-Consul Biliotti to Mr. Marling.

(No. 2.)
Sir, *Rhodes, November* 20, 1909.

AS I was posting a fresh report I had addressed to His Majesty's consul-general in Smyrna, under yesterday date, on the subject of the privileges of the Sporades Isles, I received Mr. Mounsey's despatch of the 11th instant, and in consequence thereof I lose no time in transmitting copy of my above-mentioned despatch for your Excellency's information.

I have no other observations to make on the state of the Sporades Isles but those contained in this despatch, which are the only ones which came to my knowledge, and I may say to the public at Rhodes. If I hear of any of the details contained in Mr. Petrides's letter, I shall not fail to report.

In further reply to the contents of Mr. Mounsey's despatch, I have the honour to conform the last part of my despatch No. 1 of the 27th ultimo, and take the liberty to point out that the vali in my interview with him did not say he had promised that no invasion of the privileges of the islanders was intended (a promise which he could not in fact have reasonably made), but he told me that he had stated to the delegates of the Sporades that it was not in his power to modify the decision of the Government, and advised them to send one or two delegates to submit direct to the Porte their demands, promising to address, on his side, to his superiors a report on all the questions concerning their islands. It is in answer to this report that Reshid Pasha received the instructions mentioned by me in my despatch No. 50 of the 19th instant to His Majesty's consulate at Smyrna.

The fact that the vali has not acted on the orders received, but has applied for fresh instructions proves his desire to conciliate matters. In a fresh interview which I had with the vali on the 18th instant he stated to me confidentially that he had availed himself of the fact that the instructions given to him were not clear and precise to delay their execution, also with a view to shield his responsibility.

Under these circumstances the vali having kept more than he promised, the islanders should apply to their delegates, if they sent any to Constantinople, as advised by his Excellency to do, rather than refer the matter to the vali, who in no case can do more than he has already done, and who told me that he must obey, if ordered again to carry out the instructions previously received, or fresh instructions in the same sense.

I have, &c.
A. BILIOTTI.

Inclosure 2 in No. 124.

Vice-Consul Biliotti to Consul-General Barnham.

(No. 50.)
Sir, *Rhodes, November* 19, 1909.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 46 of the 27th ultimo, and the previous correspondence on the subject of the Sporades Islands and their privileges, I have the honour to report the following information which I have received from a trustworthy source.

The vali has been lately instructed by the Sublime Porte to consider as intitled to certain privileges, granted to them by the Imperial firmans, only the four isles of Nicaria, Patmos, Leros, and Calymnos, but that the inhabitants of all the Sporades are to be subject to military service, although they maintain that they are exempted from it by their privileges.

His Excellency has been further instructed that the other eight isles forming the group of the Sporades, viz., Stampalia, Nissiros, Tylos, Symi, Halki, Cassos, Scarpanthos,

and Castelorizo, are to be assimilated to the other islands and vilayets in the Ottoman Empire. However, these eight islands, to the privileges of which exception is taken, are also in possession of identic Imperial firmans, and as no reason can be assigned for this exception, it can only be ascribed to a misunderstanding, the local authorities at Rhodes themselves not denying the fact that the privileges have been granted to all the islands of the Sporades by Imperial firmans issued at different dates.

I take the liberty to submit whether even in the absence of firmans, the enjoyment during about three and a half centuries of the same privileges as their more fortunate four neighbouring isles does not constitute a legal right in favour of the other eight isles, and whether any distinction between them would not be a crying injustice.

Be this as it may, this is only part of a question which should be considered in its nature and importance as affecting the whole group of the Sporades Isles, and in order to do so I may have to repeat a few facts already stated in previous reports, for which I crave your indulgence.

The inhabitants of the twelve Sporades, who are exclusively Christians, have always considered themselves as mere tributary communities to the Turkish Empire, and in fact they have always enjoyed self-government, by paying to the Porte an annual fixed sum proportioned to the number of the inhabitants and natural resources of each island, which, with the exception of one or two, are barren rocks, most of them even deprived of springs of fresh water.

There was in each island a mudir, assisted by five or six gendarmes, and the inhabitants levied taxes, &c., on their own exclusive account.

However, within the last forty years, governors with more extended powers, assisted by an increased number of gendarmes, and even a few soldiers in three islands, courts of justice, customs dues, indirect contribution, the tobacco régie were little by little introduced, notwithstanding the protests of the natives. Still they clung to their privileges, which in reality were limited to their being exempted from military service; hence the outcry raised when it was decided to establish it here, as reported in my aforementioned despatch, and which caused a beginning of important emigration from these islands. Just as there was some hope of the deep impression thus produced beginning to be effaced, the vali received the instructions above mentioned, and had to inform the inhabitants of the four privileged islands that the tribute they paid annually exempted them only from the verghi tax and the tithe.

Now, as the landed property of the islanders, with two or three exceptions, exclusively consists of the houses they live in, even if the verghi tax were to be regularly assessed, it would not probably yield much more than the present tribute, and as the tithes would be nil, or ridiculously insignificant, in the two or three islands growing agricultural produce, it is difficult to understand what interest induces the Porte to raise the question, which may have as consequence to most seriously trouble the public tranquillity in this vilayet, which is now perfectly quiet.

The vali himself seems to share so much this opinion that he has refrained from acting on the instructions received, that emanate from the Council of Ministers, and may be reversed by the Parliament. Reshid Pasha has wisely and prudently applied for further instructions.

In order to give an idea of the mood of the islanders at this juncture, I may mention that a civil officer, who having been in the Ottoman archipelago during the last twenty-two years is well acquainted with the character of the natives, was acting kaïmakam in the island of Symi, when he was ordered to post up the decree calling the islanders to military service. He took care to do nothing of the kind, but the newly appointed kaïmakam, not having followed his example, had the mortification a few days ago to see all the decrees posted up by his orders torn up immediately, for which it would be rash to try and claim redress.

If the Porte insisted on the execution just now of the instructions given to the vali, there cannot be the slightest doubt that all the male population of the Sporades would emigrate, and that the enrolment of the natives, which the measure has in view, would be entirely frustrated, with the further result of increasing the hostility of the islanders towards the Ottoman Government and of augmenting the number of malcontents in Crete and Greece, where they would naturally take refuge. If, on the contrary, the enforcing of military service and the question of privileges were dropped at the present juncture, their hostility would be changed into a feeling of satisfaction, having as immediate consequence the discontinuance of emigration, which is on the increase.

As regards the financial advantages which might be derived from the abolition of privileges rendering the natives liable to such impositions as tax on forest, quarries, lime-kilns, and such other duties or fees to which they might become liable by their

assimilation to the other Ottoman possessions, they are so insignificant that it is not worth while even to discuss the question, the more so that emigration may defeat all calculations. In any case, there could be no more inopportune moment to modify the existing state of things in these islands than when the Cretan question is on the tapis and the situation in Greece quite abnormal, the islands of the Sporades deeply sympathising with these two countries.

In completing the present report it occurred to me to submit, on the other hand, whether in principle privileges granted by Government to a community exonerating them from existing duties, taxes, &c., imply that these communities are exonerated as well of all taxation, duties, &c., which may be established after that date in other parts of the Empire.

I have, &c.
A. BILIOTTI.

[45121] No. 125.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(*Received December 13.*)

(No. 945.)
Sir,

Pera, December 4, 1909.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 929 of the 22nd ultimo, I have the honour to transmit herewith a copy of a despatch from His Majesty's consul-general at Beirout reporting the arrival at Tripoli of M. Piersin, the chief engineer of the Damascus–Hama and Prolongement Railway Company, to start work on the new Tripoli–Homs line.

The convention for this concession was signed here on the 30th October last, but I have so far been unable to obtain a copy of it. The Imperial firman sanctioning the convention has not been published yet, but the company have summoned a meeting to discuss the raising of capital for working expenses here on the 14th instant.

I have, &c.
CHARLES M. MARLING.

Inclosure in No. 125.

Consul-General Cumberbatch to Mr. Marling.

(No. 79.)
Sir,

Beirout, November 25, 1909.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 17, Confidential, of the 16th February, on the subject of the Tripoli to Homs Railway scheme, I have the honour to report the arrival at Tripoli of M. Piersin, the head engineer of the Damascus–Hama and Prolongement Railway Company, and his assistants, to commence operations on the new branch line from Tripoli to Homs in accordance with the concession accorded to the Damascus–Hama and Prolongement Railway Company, the particulars of which are, I believe, known at His Majesty's Embassy.

M. Piersin, who superintended the building of the Rayak–Aleppo line, has expressed a hope of being able to commence the construction work proper in about two months, and to complete the railway in eighteen months to two years if he is not hindered in any way.

It is said that the company, instead of linking Tripoli with Homs direct, will try to connect it with Kusseir, the last station but one on the Rayak–Homs section, to save about 20 kilom.

It is to be supposed that the company will make Tripoli the outlet for the extra traffic of the overburdened narrow-gauge cog-wheel line between Rayak and Beirout, which will automatically increase with the agricultural development of the country, and though the building of the new line has been reluctantly taken in hand by the company, it will probably be eventually found of great use in relieving their present line to Beirout, whose limited carrying capacity has already been reached.

As the company is also interested in the Beirout harbour, and as the narrow-gauge cog-wheel line from Beirout to Rayak does not enjoy any kilometric guarantee, it is natural to suppose that it will do its best to prevent the Tripoli–Homs Railway from seriously injuring these two concerns by extracting the utmost benefit it can from the kilometrically guaranteed Rayak–Homs–Aleppo section by a reduction of rates.

The present sanctioned rates are 35, 30, and 25 paras per kilometric ton, but for whole waggons special rates can be quoted and other devices resorted to to make the transport from Aleppo and the intermediate stations to Beirout almost as cheap as to Tripoli.

I have, &c.
H. A. CUMBERBATCH.

[45127] No. 126.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 13.)

(No. 951.)
Sir,
Pera, December 7, 1909.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith for your information copy of a despatch from His Majesty's consul at Bussorah, reporting that permission had, according to the late Vali of Bussorah, been given to a certain Yusuf Abdul Ahad to form a company in order to run two steamers between Bussorah and Bagdad.

From inquiries made at the Ministry of the Interior here, it appears that the application of Yusuf Abdul Ahad has been forwarded to the Ministry of Public Works, which has so far taken no action in the matter owing to the pending Lynch negotiations.

I have, &c.
CHARLES M. MARLING.

Inclosure in No. 126.

Consul Crow to Sir G. Lowther.

(No. 54.)
Sir,
Bussorah, October 30, 1909.

I HAVE the honour to report the following items of news received here regarding river navigation, which may be of interest.

The late vali, Arif Bey, informed the Minister of the Interior in September last, that the vilayet had given permission to Yusuf Abdul Ahad to form a company in order to run two steamers between Bussorah and Bagdad. Yusuf Abdul Ahad, who is an Ottoman subject, is a Christian broker in the employment of Messrs. F. Strick and Co. I understand he has no capital of his own. No company is being formed as yet.

About three months ago the vilayet gave permission to Aga Jafer, a Turkish subject, and formerly agent of the Bombay and Persian Steam Navigation Company, to run two steamers on the Euphrates. The "Kazimi" belonging to Aga Jafer proceeded in the summer to the Euphrates accordingly, but stuck on a sand bank, and has not yet been refloated.

It is reported here that the steamers of the "Idare Nehriye," that is, the former Suriye steamers, have been sold at Constantinople to a foreign firm for £T. 300,000. This report is not confirmed officially.

Owing to the unrest in the Montific district, reported in my telegram No. 73 of the 16th October last, the Turkish gun-boat "Aluis" proceeded to Suk-es-Shiyukh on the Euphrates.

The river has fallen considerably, and the "Aluis" is unable to continue her return journey below Hammar.

The administrative council of the vilayet on the 22nd October decided to deepen the Ashar Creek from the custom-house as far as Bussorah. A portion of this creek near Bussorah town has now been closed to navigation preparatory to this operation, but work has not yet begun.

The new vali, Nazif Bey, arrived by the British India mail steamer on the 29th October. He was not allowed to land at Mohammerah and proceed by river steamer as he proposed, but was placed in quarantine at Bussorah by the sanitary authorities. No grain is coming down from up-river, and I hear there is great scarcity. A joint petition has been addressed by the inhabitants to the vilayet that imported grain may be exempted from customs duty.

I have, &c.
F. E. CROW.

[45129] No. 127.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 13.)

(No. 953. Confidential.)
Sir,
Constantinople, December 7, 1909.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 902 of the 13th ultimo, I have the honour to transmit a copy of a further despatch which I have received from His Majesty's vice-consul at Mosul regarding the Nestorians of Elkosh. The despatch reports upon the persecution of the Nestorians by the Chaldean Catholics, and remarks upon the danger of allowing the present state of affairs to continue.

I have, &c.
CHARLES M. MARLING.

Inclosure in No. 127.

Vice-Consul Wilkie Young to Sir G. Lowther.

(No. 25. Confidential.)
Sir,
Mosul, November 13, 1909.

REFERRING to the despatches which I had the honour to address to your Excellency on the 13th February, 15th and 22nd October, and to my telegram of the 8th instant, relating to the position of the Nestorians of Elkosh, I beg leave to report the following:—

On the 2nd instant another petition reached me from the Elkosh Nestorians, from which I gather that the Chaldean Roman Catholic priests (from whose authority they are endeavouring to escape) are subjecting them to an organised persecution. It seems that when recruiting was proceeding in the village, the Chaldean Roman Catholic mukhtar gave the name of the Nestorian priest Hanna as one who was liable to serve, declining to recognise that he was in orders. He also gave in the names of several other Nestorians as "liable to serve," though it was perfectly well known that they had passed the age. As the Government have not yet recognised the Nestorians of Elkosh as a community, they have no mukhtar of their own, and consequently no means of protecting themselves from this sort of coercion. I replied very briefly to the petition, merely advising its authors, as Ottoman subjects, to submit their grievances to the proper authority, *i.e.*, to the governor-general.

His Excellency and the secretary-general of the vilayet were dining here on the 8th, and I saw them both again privately on the 10th (when I went to thank them for their visits on His Majesty's birthday). The two occasions seemed favourable for referring unofficially to the state of affairs at Elkosh. The governor and the secretary-general (I gather that the matter really rests with the latter) both promised me that it should be investigated and that if a favourable decision could not be given here, it should be referred to Constantinople. The villagers have since presented a petition to his Excellency and are awaiting the result.

Their demand is—

1. That their names be separated from those of the Chaldean Roman Catholics; and
2. That their bishop, Mar Elia (who is at present being administratively detained at Julamerk), be permitted to come to them.

As regards the first point, it would seem that even if the Government refuse to recognise a Nestorian community at Elkosh, they are bound at least to recognise these people as "Ottoman Christians" and to remove their names from the list of Chaldean Roman Catholics.

As regards the second point, the detention of Bishop Mar Elia appears to be unjust; but if there be a valid reason for not allowing him to return to his home (Elkosh), it would seem that Mar Shimun might be authorised to appoint someone in his stead.

Both demands, however, as they stand appear to be not only legitimate and reasonable, but even of a nature to appeal to the sympathy of the present Government, as coming from Ottoman subjects who ask nothing better than to serve their country as such and to withdraw themselves from an alien authority.

I fear that there is nothing more that can be done here unofficially with a view to

obtaining justice for these people. It is freely rumoured that the patriarch has distributed a considerable sum in certain quarters in order to have the question settled in his favour. However this may be, the upshot will probably be evident within the next few weeks. If the Ottoman authorities continue to take sides against them, the Nestorians, deprived of their bishop and despairing of help, will either succumb to coercion and return to Rome or they will resist. Six years ago, when an attempt was made by the inhabitants of this same village to escape from the control of the Patriarch Emmanuel, several of them actually became Moslems rather than submit: this city was in uproar for the best part of a week, the relations between Moslems and Christians were greatly strained, and there seems to have been grave danger of a massacre. It must be hoped that, warned by the past, the Government will on the present occasion steer clear of so dangerous a crisis; but—sentiment apart and looking at the question from the point of view of the merest expediency—it seems unwise to trifle indefinitely with the vaunted principles of the Constitution at the expense of strong and embittered religious feeling.

I have, &c.
H. E. WILKIE YOUNG.

Note.

As reported in a despatch of the 13th February last, the Nestorians of Elkosh stated in the first petition addressed by them to this vice-consulate that they "would rather become Moslems than return to Rome." I have no means of knowing how far this may have been a mere rhetorical threat; but it seems that something of the kind actually occurred six years ago. On the 23rd January, 1903, Mr. Rassam reported as follows:—

"When the ulema and inhabitants of the city saw that the vali hesitated to recognise them [*i.e.*, nine Christians from Elkosh] as Moslems, the ulema ordered the people to close the market and all their shops. Then gathering together, some carrying arms and some Mahommedan flags, they all proceeded with the Elkosh men to attack the vali in the konak and to force the latter to accept their conversion to Islam. When the vali saw the state of affairs, he sent a guard to protect the Chaldean Patriarchate, the Dominican Fathers and the Church of the Syrian Catholics, and ordered the Alai Beg to close the gates of the konak and disperse the crowd. In spite of all this, they broke and forced the gate and rushed to the vali's room, beating the aide-de-camp at the door. The vali was frightened and fled to the harem.

"Then, seeing the riot that was going forward and fearing a general massacre of Christians, he unwillingly and against the orders of the Porte consented to recognise the conversion to Islam of the nine Christians, after which the people returned to the city in triumph."

H. E. W. Y.

[45336] No. 128.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 13.)

(No. 363.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, December 13, 1909.*

FOLLOWING is result of debate on Lynch Concession reported in my telegram No. 341 of the 11th December.

Vote of confidence in Government passed by large majority, Chamber authorising fusion of companies but stipulating that Treasury shall incur no financial obligation thereby. Minister of Public Works had been previously informed by Colonel Picot that latter would agree to omit all reference to irrigation scheme, the omission of which implies silence as to compensation question, and is the only means of relieving Treasury of liability.

[43495] No. 129.

Foreign Office to Mr. Clifford Beckett.

Sir, *Foreign Office, December 13, 1909.*

I AM directed by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs to inform you that he referred to His Majesty's chargé d'affaires at Constantinople for his observations the proposal made by you in conversation with Mr. Mallet on the 27th October, to the effect that applications for concessions in Turkey should be examined by the Financial Commission as well as by the Turkish Ministry of Public Works.

I am to inform you that in Mr. Marling's opinion such a procedure as that proposed by you would not be practicable, and could not be put forward to the Porte by His Majesty's Embassy. The Public Works Department are the only recognized channel through which the Government receive applications for railway concessions. The department examines these applications, and on its advice the Government accept or reject the proposals made. Mr. Marling does not see what useful purpose could be gained by referring these applications to the Financial Commission, whose duties are other than those connected with public works. Moreover, the various departments are sensitive on the question of ministerial responsibility, and the Minister of Public Works has on several recent occasions resented the interference even of the Grand Vizier in matters affecting his department.

In these circumstances, Sir E. Grey does not think it desirable to make any proposal to the Turkish Government in the sense suggested by you to Mr. Mallet.

I am, &c.
LOUIS MALLET.

[43491] No. 130.

Foreign Office to Board of Trade.

Sir, *Foreign Office, December 15, 1909.*

I AM directed by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs to transmit to you, for the information of the Board of Trade, copy of a despatch from His Majesty's chargé d'affaires at Constantinople, on the subject of railway concessions in the Ottoman Empire.* For convenience of reference the previous papers, alluded to in the body of Mr. Weakley's memorandum, are also enclosed. The whole report is furnished in accordance with the request contained in your letter of the 14th September for information concerning the concession for building railways in Anatolia which it appeared at that time was likely to be granted to an American syndicate represented by Mr. Glasgow.

I am to suggest that the Board of Trade might be willing to arrange for the publication in England of the communiqué issued by the Turkish Ministry of Commerce and Public Works requiring that future applicants for concessions in Turkey shall forward with their proposals proof of their financial stability.

I am, &c.
LOUIS MALLET.

[46055] No. 131.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 20.)

(No. 960.)
Sir, *Constantinople, December 13, 1909.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 944 of the 4th instant, I have the honour to transmit herewith a copy of a despatch which I have received from Mr. Biliotti, the British vice-consul at Rhodes, giving a further account of the conditions in the Sporades Islands, and reporting among other things that the islanders have refused to be represented in the Turkish Parliament for fear of losing their privileges.

I have, &c.
CHARLES M. MARLING.

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* No. 112

Inclosure in No. 131.

Vice-Consul Billotti to Mr. Marling.

(No. 3.)

Sir, *Rhodes, December 4, 1909.*

ON receipt of Mr. Mounsey's despatch of the 11th ultimo, I hastened to point out in my despatch No. 2 of the 20th the discrepancy which existed between the communication made to me by the vali and Mr. Petrides's statement with regard to your Excellency's recent interview with the delegates of the Sporades islanders.

In continuation of my above-mentioned despatch, I now most respectfully beg to submit that the first part of Mr. Petrides's statement of the 19th October last is quite correct. It is a well-known fact, to the credit of the elected Dimarchi, who administered the Sporades Isles, under the nominal superintendence of a very inferior Turkish representative of the Porte—a fact reported by this consulate on all necessary occasions within the last fifty-five years—that, after collecting the revenues and paying the tribute due to the Government, the surplus was expended in maintaining free schools, providing medical attendance and medicines, and on public works, such as breakwaters, quays, water-tanks, &c.—a most beneficial system which is still in full force.

Before proceeding further, I beg leave to point out that the obligation to provide for each daughter a house, without which she cannot marry, and the frugality which is indispensable to attain this end, are not particular to the Sporades. It is the existing rule, when there is no money to give a dower, in all the islands of the Ottoman archepelago, to begin with Rhodes, and is perhaps in general use in the Mediterranean among Greeks.

In order to make this report as complete as possible, I referred to the correspondence of the late Mr. Consul Campbell, who upwards of half a century ago visited all the Sporades islands in British ships of war and made special reports on each of these isles (Blue Book for the years 1857–9, No. 7) on information obtained from the islanders. The information therein contained is summed up in a general report on Rhodes, on which island all the Sporades depended. Mr. Consul Campbell states, p. 539.: "The Sporades Isles collect on their own account the respective tenths (tithes), custom-house dues, and taxes for all local purposes, paying the Government a fixed annual tribute and the tax for soldiers."

As no custom-houses existed at that time in the Sporades, the custom dues mentioned by Mr. Campbell referred to a duty of from 1 to 3 per cent. levied on all imports and exports by the natives on their exclusive account.

I have reason to be fully convinced that, in consequence of the Bedel-i-Askarieh and the tribute being amalgamated in one fixed sum, the islanders still sincerely labour under the impression that they paid no tax for exemption from military service. But Mr. Campbell's detailed statement on the subject is confirmed by Mr. George Young's "Corps de Droit musulman" (vol. i, Chapter VI.A, p. 156, Iles Sporades). If any doubt still existed it can be cleared up by referring to the firmans granting the privileges in question to the Sporades, a list of which is given in note 2 in the same chapter. Reference may also be made to the firmans mentioned in this list in order to ascertain the right to privileges of the Sporades Islands, which is now contested by the Porte on ground that the only existing firmans in the archives are those of Calymnos, Leros, Patmos, and Nicaria.

The dues now levied by the Turkish custom-houses, established in 1869, weigh as well on foreigners as on the natives; but this additional fee has not curtailed in any way the original incomes derived by the communities from the dues of from 1 to 3 per cent. they levied on the imports and exports.

The Christian elders now exact a uniform tax of 3 per cent.—half from the seller and as much from the buyer—on sponges, which is the only important article of exportation, and 2 per cent. on imports as landing-stage fee, and it appears that on an annual sum (amounting from Symi to 2,387 piastres) is paid to each island on behalf of its schools out of the custom-house revenues. The real dissatisfaction, especially at Symi and Calymnos, with regard to Turkish Customs is their now being deprived of the very substantial profits realised by importing into the neighbouring coast of Anatolia foreign goods which were landed in their isles free of the usual Turkish custom-house dues.

No change of any sort has taken place in all local matters. The Christian elders continue to be elected by the people, they assess the taxes to be paid, they collect and

pay the tribute due to the Porte, and with the surplus supply free education, free medical attendance, medicines, &c., and public works, so far as the money goes. I am told that at Calymnos, where the collection of tithes mounting to 112,000 piastres annually gave rise to abuses, they have fixed instead a personal tax on male adults of 1 Turkish dollar (3*s.* 4*d.*). The foregoing revenues are collected on the exclusive accounts of the communities, which continue to levy the tithes and all other local incomes as they did half a century ago. It appears, however, that the tithes and the rent on pasture lands, which were formerly collected from the uninhabited islets, now go to the Porte.

The intense excitement which took place in the Sporades and caused a beginning of emigration, was principally due to the deep conviction of the natives that they were not liable to military service, as I have explained before, and that their being called to enroll was an encroachment upon their privileges, of which they are most jealous. This excitement was fanned by the fact that only four isles, Calymnos, Leros, Patmos, and Nicaria, were considered by the Porte as having a right to privileges, and by the intention of the Government to impose fresh taxes, trifling as they might be.

Although it is now proved that the islanders have always paid the tax exempting Christians from military service, I still persist, for the reasons mentioned in my immediately preceding despatch, in the opinion that it would be in the interest of both the Porte and the islanders to postpone to a later period the enrolment of the natives of the Sporades Islands, who by that time may have changed their minds, as it has been the case elsewhere. I further maintain that even if it happened that some of these islands have no special firmans granting them privileges, they should all be treated on the same footing as they have been for centuries, and that any change in the present administrative system which may be considered by the isles of the Sporades as privileged could not be carried out without danger of perturbation.

Hitherto no official or private information has reached this island, but a number of women folk intended to promote an agitation against the Government and that the wise advice of the elders had prevented them from doing so; nor have we heard that in their despair people thronged to the Church. If any such incidents had taken place in the Sporades, the news had certainly been known at Rhodes.

If the statement that there has been recently at Rhodes a change in the Government concerns Ekrem Bey the immediate predecessor of the vali, it is now known that he has been dismissed from his post about two months ago for not having made as ordered domiciliary visits in the houses of the islanders in order to confiscate the arms supposed to be in their possession. Personally Reshid Pasha, the present vali, is favourably disposed towards them and has openly said so in the Administrative Council; he has submitted his views to the Porte, but is of course bound to obey orders. But henceforth it may not be in the power of Ministers themselves to decide similar questions which pertain to Parliament.

I may here point out that the islanders in spite of all disinterested advice, obstinately refuse to be represented in Parliament from fear that their so doing would have deprived them of their privileges. The consequence is that they have no one to take their interests at heart while, by voting together with Rhodes and Scio the Sporades Islands might have obtained three seats which, together with five seats possessed by the other islands of the archipelago, would have secured a group of eight deputies, representing a force to be reckoned with.

The innovations which took place in 1869 consisted:—

1. In the appointment of Turkish governors of some standing and adequate staffs, and this change was so far from being disapproved that for special reasons of their own the islanders of Leros applied for a governor of a higher rank (first-class kaimakam), even offering, I am told, to compensate for the higher salary;

2. Civil and penal courts of justice and commercial tribunals on the same footing as in other vilayets of the Empire; but the native local courts are allowed to exist and still continue to settle all religious and civil suits between natives, the reformed courts in the Sporades or the courts of appeal in Rhodes, on which last island they all depend, interfering only at the request of one of the parties. The only case in which the Cadi of Rhodes had to interfere, the delegate he sent to Symi to make an inquest was stoned and compelled to beat a hasty retreat, his presence in Symi being considered an infringement of privilege. Of course the Porte defrays the expenses connected with these two reformed branches, the aggregate amount of which exceeds by far the tribute and tax for soldiers received from the Sporades Islands;

3. The indirect contributions; and

4. The tobacco regie, which exists nominally only.

These two administrations, together with the custom-house dues, levied on account of the Government, are the great contention between the Porte and the islanders; and, in fact, it is a question of principle which should be settled once for all in the interests of both parties.

The Porte maintains that the privileges granted by different Sultans exonerate them only from the taxes, contributions, dues, &c., existing at the date of the firmans and not from all those which may be established at any later period.

Be this as it may, if the condition of the Sporades Islands is due to the present administration, no better system could be devised on the whole for the promotion of their welfare, as Mr. Petrides states himself in the paragraph beginning with the words: "When the recent measures . . . ."

In fact, so far as I know and have been able to find out from fresh exhaustive enquiries, the general revenue levied on their special account by the isles of the Sporades have increased in some of them rather than decreased within the last forty years; the progress made in general expansion and industries leaves no margin for complaint; the population has increased twofold, and, perhaps, more especially in the larger islands; the inhabitants of the isles, who temporarily expatriate themselves, especially those of Leros, bring back money; the shipping of Castellorizo (the only island where there is a harbour-master) has increased in tonnage and is in a flourishing condition; the inhabitants of the Island of Cassos own fourteen steamers and, owing to their superior seafaring qualities, easily find remunerative employment wherever they go; the natives of Scarpanthos and of Nicaria, the last of whom especially have not made any progress (although these two islands are the best endowed with natural advantages), have greatly improved their condition; even the small Island of Nissiros, which is covered with fruit trees and whose natives temporarily expatriate themselves, has been erecting for the last ten years a substantial breakwater for a harbour. The sponge-fishing Isles of Halki, Symi, and Calymnos were the only black spots in the Sporades. Calymnos and especially Symi which, together with Halki, are less fortunate with regard to natural resources, are in a precarious condition.

I must explain that the use of diving apparatus for sponges was introduced here about forty years ago with very profitable success to begin with. After a number of years of experiment, the naked divers raised the cry, not inconsistent, perhaps, that the continual fishing with apparatus would prevent the growth of sponges and that in a few years this industry, the only one possible for these three islands, would completely disappear. Parties formed for and against apparatus were formed, and ever since have furiously striven between them. In consequence of frequent accidents of death, paralysis taking place, the apparatus divers claimed and obtained high wages which went on increasing from year to year. The divers, all young men, who were never sure to come back alive or not crippled for life, were led to enjoy life, spending the advances received from the owners of diving apparatus, compelling the latter to provide them with additional and excessive sums of money for the maintenance of their families during their protracted absence. Besides this, the masters of fishing-boats, in order to evade the payment of the license for fishing, amounting to 32*l.*, a rather heavy tax obtained by means of a bribe of a few liras permission to start from their island with the consequence that when captured, the authorities confiscated the boat, diving apparatus and other appliances together with the sponges fished. This was specially the case when it was prohibited to fish for sponges with diving apparatus. Owing to these circumstances and to failures in the fishery, masters of boats, money-lenders, and others were ruined, involving in their disasters widows and orphans, who, in consequence of the accidents, as above explained, had increased to a frightful number, as well as foreign merchants who were dealing in sponges. I am assured that twenty years ago there were fifty to sixty merchants worth 60,000*l.* to 70,000*l.* whilst there are to-day hardly five or six who have managed to save a small part of their money. The same disaster has taken place at Calymnos and Halki owing to the same causes. Under these circumstances, the misery existing in these three islands can hardly be ascribed to the innovations which were introduced in 1869.

Since five or six years the natives of Halki have temporarily emigrated *en masse* into the United States of America, and with diving apparatus, fish for sponges with success. They are regularly sending money to their families here, who little by little are recovering from misery.

We have heard of the meeting at Symi of the delegates of the Sporades on the 5th October, but not the details mentioned by Mr. Petrides in the last paragraph of his statement. However, the reverence of Moslems for Christian shrines and relics and even the belief in Christian miracles is not limited to Symi but extends to Rhodes,

including Crete and other localities in Turkey. These facts would tend to prove that it is not so much religious but rather political feeling which prevents an easy fusion between Moslems and Christians.

I have, &c.,
A. BILIOTTI.

[46057] No. 132.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 20.)

(No. 963.)
Sir, *Constantinople, December 14, 1909.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 891 of the 9th November, I have the honour to transmit herewith copies of two despatches which I have received from His Majesty's consul-general at Smyrna respecting the attack made on Messrs. Paterson and Doly by brigands, and reporting the condemnation of three to death and six to death by default.

I have, &c.,
CHARLES M. MARLING.

Inclosure 1 in No. 132.

Consul-General Barnham to Mr. Marling.

(No. 116.)
Sir, *Smyrna, December 11, 1909.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 107, Confidential, of the 5th ultimo, I have the honour to report that a court-martial has been held at Smyrna for the trial of persons arrested in connection with the attack upon Mr. Eric Paterson and Mr. Herbert Doly.

The court was presided over by Colonel Arif Bey, formerly acting commandant at Smyrna, and was composed of two other military members, viz., Lieutenant-Colonels Shekib Bey and Kiazim Bey, with three judicial members.

The first arrest effected by the police was that of a man named Costi, who was seen riding about Bournabat on the afternoon of the occurrence, and had spoken to Eric Paterson in a manner which aroused his suspicions.

Under pressure this man revealed the plan of operations, and gave as his accomplices the names of some villagers of Bournabat, Kouklondja, and Bondja. Other evidence was found in the discovery of the clothing of some of the men hidden in the cemetery.

The first impression produced on the mind of the authorities was that this was a local affair and that no well-known brigands were implicated. It was not until the arrival at Smyrna of Colonel Kara Said, who had been sent here to take charge of operations in the interior against Tchakirdji, that it was discovered that members of Capoulan Andrea's band had taken part in it, and that one of his men had been wounded by Mr. Paterson and was in hiding in the neighbourhood.

About ten days ago Colonel Kara Said, with Mehmed Effendi, the chief of police, made a seizure of arms and ammunition in a house at Bondja, and subjected the occupant of the house to pressure under which he gave information which led to the arrest of the wounded man, Antoni Palaiomenos.

The court-martial has condemned to death Antoni Yerghoubos Palaiomenos, Christo Sakalis, of Kouklondja, Capoulan Yanni Pakiotis, and his servant Vassili Zugouras, and six others have been sentenced to death by default.

The court has sentenced three men to fifteen years' imprisonment each, viz., Stamati Dushemelji, Georgi Trompoumas, and Christo Yanopoulo, and one man named Georgi Vourvoulias to four years' and another named Kokkos Kariacou to three years' imprisonment.

The public hope that the sentences of capital punishment will be carried out soon and in a conspicuous manner, one man, for instance, being hanged at Bournabat, another at Bondja, and a third at Kouklondja, but I understand that it is intended to delay the executions in the hope of further information from them.

Stamati Dushemelji organised the whole attack but took no actual part in it, hence he escaped the death penalty.

Last week, by request of the authorities, Baron Van Heemstra, the gentleman who

was carried off from his farm by Capudan Andréa's band in 1907, came down to Smyrna and identified Antoni Yeorgboulos Palemenos as well as another prisoner named Athanas Dromara, who, however, is not implicated in the Paterson affair.

I may here mention that Capudan Andréa is believed to be dead.

He was frequently seen in the village of Boudja after his release from prison on the proclamation of the constitution, but he suddenly disappeared, and is supposed to have gone to Greece and died there.

I have, &c.
HENRY D. BARNHAM.

Inclosure 2 in No. 132.

Consul-General Barnham to Mr. Marling.

(No. 117.)
Sir, *Smyrna, December* 11, 1909.

I HAVE the honour to supplement my despatch No. 116 of this day's date by information just received from the Greek consul-general to the effect that two of the persons condemned to death by the court-martial, Antoni Gheorgeoli (properly called Anton Panaghiotopoulo) and Zigouras (properly called Ariagnostopoulo) are Hellenic subjects, as well as Stamati Dushemedji and Christo Yanopoulo, who were sentenced respectively to fifteen and five years' imprisonment.

I have, &c.
HENRY D. BARNHAM.

[46059] No. 133.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 20.)

(No. 965.)
Sir, *Constantinople, December* 13, 1909.

IN my telegram No. 342 of yesterday's date I had the honour to report that a number of Moslems had been hanged recently at Adana in connection with the massacres.

Information received from His Majesty's acting vice-consul in that town tends to show that, prior to these executions, the conduct of the authorities in carrying out the decisions of the court martial left much to be desired. Mr. Chafy reported on the 3rd December the release of two Armenians and about fifteen Moslems, who had been detained under suspicion of participation in the massacres. Of these two Armenians, both of whom were notables of Adana, one named Geukderelian was accused of having been one of the principal causes of the massacres, in the quality of leader of a band of fedais; while the other, a leading Adana tradesman, was condemned for murder for having fired on Moslems who attacked his house. As regards the Moslem prisoners, His Majesty's acting vice-consul mentions one of them, named Kerim Aga, as being a "chingane," or gypsy, of the worst reputation, who, having become a farmer, organised, in conjunction with his sister, the murder of Armenians. This man appears to be one of a considerable number who are in a position to purchase immunity from justice.

This simultaneous release of Armenians and Moslems seems to suggest the existence of a system of exchanges, and His Majesty's acting vice-consul emphasises his suspicion that activity exists in influential circles for the purpose of diverting the course of justice. He adds that his impressions are derived from casual information concerning the courts martial, and states that it is impossible to determine the scope of this activity. He suggests the existence of a compact between the Government and the champions of the Armenian cause, and considers that a general understanding must have existed from the beginning between judges and judged. The Royal pardon granted to Geukderelian, whom foreign journalists describe as a leader of the Armenian separatist movement, may be considered as suspicious, if looked at in this light, and Mr. Chafy is inclined to think that the judges have been feeling their way all along to a pre-arranged solution favourable to the culprits.

It is well known that Abdul Kadr, Ishan Fikri (editor of the notorious "Ittidal"), and other instigators of the massacres, who were exiled, have since appeared either at Cairo or Constantinople.

In the despatch detailing the above points, which is dated the 6th December,

Mr. Chafy remarks that, so far from showing any signs of carrying out the promised executions of Moslems, the military commandant had begun to disband his troops of the IInd Army Corps, and reports various other withdrawals of troops from Adana.

My telegram of yesterday shows that since the 6th December a considerable number of Moslems have been hanged; but a telegram has now been received from Mr. Chafy, stating that the remaining death sentences have been specially commuted, and that there are to be no more executions. Mr. Chafy adds that the population, whose attitude during the executions had necessitated military precautions, are now appeased, and that all is well.

As regards the general situation in the district, Mr. Chafy reports satisfactorily. The vali continues his activities; the Government is undertaking sole responsibility in the relief of victims of the flood; the rebuilding of houses has been begun; a gendarmerie school has been opened at Tarsus, and a daily postal service inaugurated between Adana and Eregli.

His Majesty's ship "Aboukir" visited Mersina on the 10th instant.

I have, &c.
CHARLES M. MARLING.

[46062] No. 134.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 20.)

(No. 968. Very Confidential.)
Sir, *Constantinople, December* 13, 1909.

THE German Ambassador spoke to me on the morning of the 11th instant on the subject of the Lynch affair, and animadverted with some warmth on an article which had appeared in the "Tanin" that morning, ascribing the opposition to the fusion of the two Mesopotamian navigation companies to German instigation. A copy of the article, as well as of another published in the same paper, is inclosed. The articles in question were both signed by the editor, Hussein Jahid, one of the deputies for Constantinople, and a leading member of the party of Union and Progress, of which the "Tanin" is the principal organ. His Excellency said that there was no foundation whatever for this assertion; he himself had given the strictest orders to the dragomans of his Embassy that they should do nothing to encourage opposition to the project, while he himself had been careful to observe a strictly neutral attitude towards it, although, of course, when asked his personal opinion on the merits of the scheme, he had thought himself free to say that he was somewhat surprised that England should be pressing for a monopoly of the navigation, especially as even if it were not expressly conceded in the convention, the new company must in practice have a monopoly. As for the "Osmanischer Lloyd," he was sure that no one could complain of its articles on the matter. I told his Excellency that I had seen the article, and that I much regretted that such accusations should have been made. His Excellency's assurances, however, gave me great pleasure as disposing of the stories which I had always been loath to believe that the German Embassy was partly responsible for the campaign recently got up against the proposed company; certainly I could not say that the criticisms of the local German paper had gone beyond legitimate limits, and I had even on one occasion noticed an article that was distinctly favourable to the enterprise, but as for the monopoly I presumed that Mr. Lynch looked upon it as a necessity from a commercial point of view as without it it might be difficult to raise capital for the improvement of the navigation, such as dredging, blasting, &c.

Baron von Marschall's disclaimers are, I have not the smallest doubt, literally true but, to use a popular expression, there are other ways of killing a dog besides hanging him, and the means employed in this case was the strong expression of his Excellency's personal opinion that the new company ought not to be granted a monopoly on the river. I have frequently been told that Baron von Marschall is fond of expatiating on this point, and the same evening I was witness of an instance, when after a dinner at a private house his Excellency held forth for nearly an hour on the subject to a mixed audience that included a senator and a leading Greek banker, who will of course repeat his Excellency's pronouncements everywhere. The Ambassador presented his views with no little dexterity; he desired above all things to maintain the present Cabinet, and the question was how to find a way for them out of their difficulty; but Lynch, unfortunately and unnecessarily insisted on a monopoly and the Government, having pledged themselves to grant a monopoly must submit the question of the concession to the

Chamber—which is precisely what they had declined to do. Lynch ought to abandon the demand for a monopoly, and so extricate the Government from their difficulty. Unfortunately M. de Marschall descanted with much more insistance upon the iniquity of a monopoly and the uselessness of it in practice; and I fear the impression left on the minds of his audience was that he was far more concerned to prevent a monopoly being accorded than to find means of avoiding a Ministerial crisis.

As for the attitude of the "Osmanischer Lloyd," it is quite true that its remark on the *affaire* Lynch have been as a general rule unobjectionable, and on one or two occasions, even favourable, but on the other hand, it has seemed to me that special publicity has been consistently given to unfriendly articles which have appeared in other local papers.

The same evening, Dr. Weitz, the correspondent of the "Frankfurter Zeitung," informed me, as I understand at the German Ambassador's request, that he had been equally scrupulous in abstaining from any adverse comment on the Mesopotamian navigation question.

Mr. Weitz also informed me, very confidentially that Baron von Marschall had been so incensed at the attacks of the "Tanin," that he had called on Rifaat Pasha the same day, and had obtained some kind of excuses from him, and also a promise that instructions would be sent to the Turkish Ambassador in Berlin to offer an apology for them.

I fear, however, that the German assurances can only be accepted strictly *au pied de la lettre*, but there cannot be the smallest question but that those who have shown so determined an opposition to the scheme have always felt that in doing so they could count at least on German approval, if not on German support; at any rate, if Baron von Marschall had really wished to observe the neutral attitude he now professes to have observed, it would have been easy enough for him to have let the opposition know that he discountenanced their action; moreover, it can scarcely have been a coincidence that the attack on the Government for granting a monopoly should have followed immediately after it first came to my ears that the German Ambassador was discussing this particular point in a sense unfavourable to the British proposals. I may add that both the Grand Vizier and Rifaat Pasha have told me that Germany was our real opponent in this matter, while Javid Bey, the Minister of Finance, as late as Friday last sent me word through Mr. Whittall that the real backbone of the opposition was German hostility. Be the facts as to the part that the German Embassy and German influence have played in this matter what they may, one thing is certain, namely, that the general public here has looked upon the recent Ministerial crisis as being essentially a trial of strength between England and Germany.

How far German influence has been excited actively against us in this matter is difficult to say, but in the opinion of most people competent to judge, it could scarcely have gone further without becoming overt, and its motive was clear enough, namely, to make us realise that German influence was still paramount in Constantinople, the consciousness of which would be calculated to make us more easy to deal with in the Bagdad railway question.

Baron von Marschall's change of attitude is due probably to two main considerations, firstly, a doubt—which the issue has shown to be well-founded—whether the Government would prove to be as subservient as he hoped to German influence, which no doubt made it incumbent on him to secure a dignified retreat by denying any hostility to the scheme; and, secondly, the advances made by Dr. Gwinner to Sir Ernest Cassel for British participation in the Bagdad railway which should dispose his Excellency to a conciliatory attitude towards us.

I have, &c.

CHARLES M. MARLING.

Inclosure 1 in No. 134.

Extract from the "Tanin" of December 11, 1909.

THE LYNCH QUESTION, BY HUSSEIN JAHID.

THE Lynch question is, firstly, a German intrigue, secondly a question of personal interest, thirdly a question of ambition.

Miserable internal interests and considerations of personal greed, united with foreign intrigues, have in the end brought the country to a great crisis. They have brought us near another foreign crisis and face to face with the danger of alienating

England completely. Moreover, those who have thus played with the country's destiny have managed to pursue their selfish policy while throwing the entire responsibility on the Chamber. They tried to hoodwink the public, to take advantage of the high principles of deputies, to stir up feelings of patriotism and provoke the downfall of the Cabinet. Posts would thereupon be filled by self-seekers of the old or new school. The Germans would gain by this in two ways. Once the project was thwarted, and their commercial supremacy in Irak was undisputed, they would be gainers. And they would also be gainers inasmuch as the Cabinet which came into power as a result of their intrigues, and which, in defiance of all common sense, had struck a blow at England, would be thrown into their own arms. At the same time the rich natives would be able to form a steam-ship company on their own account. As Caresso Effendi said, it is no question of tyrants, [?] but merely that certain rich natives want to form a company.

Let us examine the German intrigue, it is only by enabling our deputies to form an opinion on the secret sides of the matter that we can hope to avert a vital national danger.

The question is not one for party politics, but a national one which may cause an upheaval in our foreign and home policy.

To understand the German point of view we have only to follow the line taken by the "Osmanischer Lloyd."

On the 8th October it says: "There is no reason to suppose that the navigation concession, or even Sir William Willcocks's scheme, would mean an invasion." It considered it politic, though its mission was to maintain German interests, to appear to pay no attention to, or even to support, this scheme.

On the 13th October it considered—in the same vein—that "any difference between the Ottoman and British Governments would be very undesirable."

After this, the tone changed to the sensational. On the 24th October, the "Osmanischer Lloyd" published an account of an imaginary meeting of the Grand Vizier, Halajian Effendi and others: "The discussion was very animated. Some persons left the room. One proposal was that the concession should be postponed until the construction of the Bagdad line, *i.e.*, until the Government should have strengthened its position in Irak." Here we have German feelings showing themselves. Their only wish is to complete the Bagdad line. They know that once navigation on the Tigris and Euphrates is properly organised, there will be no need for a railway. That is why they are trembling. They want to make the railway and establish their commercial influence there first of all and then have the navigation question arise afterwards. Their giving the secret away should open our eyes. We should realise that to oppose the Lynch question is to the advantage, not of Turkey, but of Germany.

The "Osmanischer Lloyd," then quite forgot its first attitude and announced on the 25th November that the British first dragoman went to the Parliament during a private meeting of the Union and Progress party; and this just shows how the "Osmanischer Lloyd" seeks to put a false construction on the smallest pieces of news, true or false. On the same day, it said "the formation of a company like this would not really be a triumph for the Cabinet . . . . English influence at the Porte is growing daily." And laying aside its first mask, it added that the Cabinet would fall on account of the Lynch question.

On the 26th November, realising that our interests and policy were being sacrificed to German interests, the "Tanin" abandoned its attitude of reticence. The "Osmanischer Lloyd" answered our first article by doubting whether the firman was in the name of the embassy, virtually accusing us of falsehood. We printed the firman, thereupon, the "Osmanischer Lloyd" became dumb, whereby it admitted the success of the Cabinet. Then the question of the Cabinet's right alone to grant the concession afforded another gleam of hope. It seems as if the German paper desired the obstruction of the negotiations at any price.

On the 9th December it said in despondent tones: "There seems to be a change of opinion among the deputies in favour of the Cabinet."

Yesterday it based its hopes on the Senate. Ferid Pasha showed his hand almost as openly when he remarked, "the telephone concession is being given away, too."

We have spoken openly and fearlessly because we consider it to be due to the country.

Note.—The editor is exclusively responsible, morally and materially, for the articles in the "Tanin."

Inclosure 2 in No. 134.

Extract from the "Tanin" of December 12, 1909.

THE LYNCH INTERPELLATION, BY HUSSEIN JAHID.

AFTER yesterday's sitting the country may be proud of its Cabinet and Parliament.

The Cabinet adopted the principle that it had the right to get concessions without any reference to Parliament so long as they involved no financial obligation for the State. In any case, whether there were financial obligation or not, it would be disastrous both from an economic and from a legal point of view if all concession proposals had to pass through Parliament. How disastrous it would be, what interference and intrigues, it would lead to, yesterday's sitting shows plainly enough.

The Minister of Finance showed that the State was in this case undertaking no financial obligation, and that to the satisfaction of the large majority of those present.

Certainly no permanent conclusion has been reached. But what there was to be said has been said, and the essence of the business has been brought to light, and, since the majority is conscientiously convinced, we may consider that the matter has no further importance.

Despite the efforts of those who tried to overthrow it, the Government is now stronger than ever and comes forward to meet its enemies, namely, those who would be glad to see the ruin of constitutionalism in Turkey.

[46065] No. 135.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 20.)

(No. 971.)

Sir, *Pera, December 13, 1909.*

THE operations conducted against Sheikh Barzani, as reported in my despatch No. 942 of the 1st instant and previous despatches, seems, from information that has reached me lately from Mosul, to have met with a temporary check early this month. The redifs sent out to punish the sheikh were repulsed by his men, suffering a serious loss in officers and men, and it has been found necessary to dispatch further reinforcements. The authorities have only themselves to thank for the difficulties they find themselves in now in the Mosul district, for there seems no doubt that had they at first shown the least disposition to parley with Barzani he would have willingly come to terms; and it was only their uncompromising attitude which drove him to desperate resistance. Some £T. 50,000 are thus reported to have been wasted on these military operations, with no results to show so far. Meanwhile, until lately the Hamavends remained in undisturbed power round Suleimmieh, the approaches to which they control in the interests of their allies, the Sheikh Said clan, in the city; and though the papers have announced in the last few days that in consequence of Persian co-operation on their frontier line, more Turkish troops are being sent against this unruly tribe, I have, up to the present, received no confirmation of this news. Disorder and unrest prevail nearer home. Dlem Arabs have been making raids right up to the town of Mosul, and carrying off sheep and cattle unpunished. There is talk of a combined expedition from Bagdad and Mosul against them, but their continued attacks and the raids of Kurds at Barsivi, near Zakkho, and in other parts of the vilayet have resulted in a general sense of insecurity and great detriment to trade.

The arrival of the new Vali, Muhammed Fazil, may, however, lead to more successful measures being taken against the disorderly elements. He has made a good impression at Mosul, though rather old; he is essentially a soldier in spirit, and at present refers all administrative matters to the Administrative Council.

From other parts of Anatolia news lately received is not reassuring. In the Bussorah district the Turkish troops appear to have met with a serious reverse last month at the hands of the Arab tribes, El Azarieh, Asa Cherah, and El Hassano outside Massriye. I have not been able as yet to obtain any details of the affair, but the Turkish losses amounted, it is said, to 1 major, 1 collagassi, 2 captains, and 64 soldiers killed; 3 officers and 52 men wounded. One of Sir W. Willcocks' engineers reports having seen many Arab villages in flames along the banks of the Euphrates.

Near Bitlis, the Kurds have again been committing raids, and some Armenians were recently kidnapped in the mountainous country near Modki. An expedition was sent out against the chief offender, who, after vigorous opposition, is now reported to have been arrested, and the operations have been successfully concluded with few losses on either side.

In northern Anatolia, the people are evidently unsettled and apprehensive of the future. Smuggling of arms goes on in the coast towns, and these arms are apparently transported largely inland. At Trebizond, an old Armenian lady, aged 60, was arrested on landing the other day and found to have 50 Mauser rifles, 35 bayonets, and some 2,000 cartridges in her luggage; and an incident has been created, after repeated unavailing protests to his vice-consulate, of the dragoman to the Greek vice-consul at Trebizond on a charge of smuggling Mausers. The man showed great impertinence to the authorities, and as his chief refused to restrain him in any way he has been imprisoned for trial.

The new Vali, Mustafa Bey, has now reached Trebizond. He is described as a man of no administrative experience, but plenty of enterprise. His predecessor, Arifi Pasha, was one of the first constitutional appointments. He was largely to thank for the quiet which prevailed at Trebizond during the disturbances in the spring, and general regret is felt that ill-health and family affairs have compelled him to resign his post.

A somewhat belated court-martial has now been appointed at Diarbekir to inquire into the question as to who was responsible for the attack made on the regular troops at Veranshehir in August 1908 (see Sir Gerard Lowther's despatches on Anatolian affairs of March last). The president and first member of this court-martial are reputed to be men of high standing and impartial views, and the Vali states that the object of the inquiry is simply to ascertain who ordered the firing on the soldiers, and then to liberate or condemn, according to the finding of the court, those now in prison at Diarbekir. Among these prisoners are the two sons of the late Ibrahim Pasha, who have been in detention ever since this question was threshed out by the Commission in the spring.

From the Yemen reports dated about the 1st December state that the Arab rebels have dropped their forward movement. Turkish troops mustered north of Hodeidah number about 4,000, and are preparing to advance soon. The commander has had an interview with the Pretender Idris, who assured him of his loyalty, and declared that he is not responsible for the revolt. From the latest telegrams that have reached me it seemed likely that Idris would facilitate the march of the troops to his capital, Assyr, and would come to some arrangement with them, but I have no details at present of the negotiations.

I have, &c.
CHARLES M. MARLING.

[46067] No. 136.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 20.)

(No. 973.)

Sir, *Constantinople, December 14, 1909.*

AS I ventured to forecast in my despatch No. 949 of the 6th instant, the question of the navigation of the Mesopotamian rivers became one of confidence in the Ministry, which at one time came perilously near falling. Up till the 7th instant the Grand Vizier professed perfect confidence, but on the evening of the following day (Wednesday) Djavid Bey, the Minister of Finance, informed Mr. Whittall that he was very doubtful as to the issue. Up to that time he said the attack on the Government had been directed towards the intrinsic merits of the case in general, though more particularly towards the questions of the expediency of the monopoly, and so long as the discussion was conducted on those lines he had been confident of making a successful defence. At the last moment, however, an article in the constitution had been invoked which directed that the grant of all concessions entailing financial charge on the Treasury must be submitted to Parliament; he (Djavid Bey) did not see how the Government could meet this point, so long as there was a clause in the convention for the fusion of the two companies which stipulated for compensation being paid to the new company by the Government in the event of navigation being impeded or rendered impossible by the projected irrigation works. When Mr. Whittall and Colonel Picot came to talk the position over with me the next morning, we agreed that

the Government could not be urged to violate the constitution, which must inevitably bring about its fall, and that the best solution would be for Ministers to announce their firm intention to comply with the constitution in this matter, and then, having explained the lines on which the projected fusion was to be negotiated, to request the Chamber to empower them by a vote of confidence to conclude the transaction. This suggestion was conveyed to Djavid Bey by Mr. Whittall, not, of course, as coming from the Embassy, and the Minister agreed that this, the bold course, was the best to adopt.

Subsequently, however, Mr. Whittall and Colonel Picot, on second thoughts, considered that as they had Mr. Lynch's authority to agree to the omission from the convention of any mention of the results which might ensue from the irrigation schemes, and consequently also of compensation, they could by making a declaration to that effect to the Minister for Public Works put the Government in a position to state that the proposed amalgamation would not carry with it any charge on the Treasury, and an official letter to that effect was accordingly communicated to Haladjian Effendi, and it was with affairs in this position that the Government prepared to meet the Chamber for the interpellation on the 11th instant. But they were extremely nervous as to the result, for on the one hand the Senate had showed its hostility by bringing in a Bill providing that no concession could be granted without the sanction of Parliament, and, on the other, it was exceedingly doubtful in the confused state of parties in the Chamber (which I endeavoured to describe in my despatch No. 949 of the 6th December) how any particular group would vote, and, moreover, Ministers were painfully aware of disaffection in the ranks of their own nominal supporters. That their apprehensions on this score were well founded was shown when in the course of the confused and stormy debate last Saturday Halil Bey (Munteche), the official leader of the Committee of Union and Progress party in the Chamber, brought forward and carried a motion condemning the Government for desiring to accord a concession creating a monopoly and laying a charge on the Treasury. The defeat of the Government, however, once accomplished, seemed to appal its authors, and when, after a lengthy interruption, the debate was resumed, the adverse vote, by some process of reasoning unintelligible to any but an Oriental mind, was tacitly ignored, so that when the House finally rose the Cabinet appeared to be in a rather stronger position than in the morning.

There can, I think, be little doubt that the chief argument employed was an appeal to the pro-English sentiments of the House, and that the means used to raise them was to represent the Germans as the real instigators of the campaign against an English interest.

By the evening of the following day it was generally understood that the Government was practically safe, and on the 13th the vote of confidence proposed by Halil Bey, the Committee of Union and Progress leader, who had carried a motion adverse to the Government in the earlier sitting, was agreed to by 168 votes to 8, with 45 abstentions. It is to be noted that the Greek, Armenian, and Albanian deputies, though in opposition to the present Committee Government, voted in its favour in the division owing to the British character of the "Lynch fusion," and Ismail Kemal Bey put in a motion alluding to the enormous services rendered by England to Turkey at the time the Lynch concession was originally granted.

The effect of the vote is to authorise the Government, pending the passage of the Senates Bill mentioned above, to conclude the amalgamation on its present lines, provided that it involves no charge on the Treasury. The Government would seem thus to have achieved a notable victory, but, with Kiamil Pasha's experience of last spring in mind, it would be rash to prophecy that their position is really secure.

The enclosed extracts from the "Stamboul" give the best accounts of the proceedings in Parliament,* which, especially on the 11th instant, were so confused as to be scarcely intelligible to the deputies themselves.

I have, &c.
CHARLES M. MARLING.

* Not printed

[45974] No. 137.

Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(*Received December* 20.)

(No. 659.)
Sir, *St. Petersburgh, December* 14, 1909.

I HAVE the honour to report that the "Novoe Vremya" publishes to-day an article on proposed railway construction in Turkey, of which the following is a summary:—

"We will not dwell on the general significance for Russia of this or that tendency of Turkish railway policy, but will content ourselves with recounting, as an example, the history of the Anatolian Railway. While the strategic importance of this line was clear to everybody in Russia, few thought out seriously the results which its construction might entail on Russian commerce. Since its construction, the demand in Constantinople for Russian flour and live-stock has declined. The construction of new lines towards the Persian Gulf will have even more influence on Russian trade with the Middle East, and it is therefore necessary to make arrangements before they are built. It must be regretted that the policy of Russia towards Turkish railway construction has hitherto been hostile. We are now reaping the fruits of that policy. When the Bagdad Railway was projected in 1903 Russia and England adopted an unfortunate attitude. The realisation of the original plan would have been far more advantageous to the interests of France, Russia, and England, and to Russian commerce in particular. Judging by latest news from Constantinople, Russian policy in regard to railway construction would seem to have changed, and to be taking a course more in accordance with Russian commercial interests, and more likely to strengthen neighbourly relations with Turkey. As regards the renewed proposal for the construction of a narrow-gauge line between Samsun and Sivas, it is to be hoped that the question will be settled in a manner consonant with Russian as well as with Turkish interests. The joining of Sivas with the sea by a direct line will give the cheapest possible outlet for the agricultural produce of the region, and its significance for Turkey is therefore obvious; but for Russia its significance is not so simple. The new route will create a rivalry in the Black Sea between the produce of north-eastern Anatolia and that of south Russia and the western Caucasus, and it will also facilitate the introduction of foreign goods into Turkey, and subsequently into Persia. These inevitable disadvantages will be partially balanced by the introduction of Russian capital and labour into the building of these new lines and the creation of a new market for Russian iron and coal. The participation of Russian financiers in the construction of railways in Asia Minor is of equal importance, both politically and economically, and the Russian Government is bound to take all steps within its power to assist Russian financial groups in participating actively in Turkish enterprise. But the Government must not risk one rouble from the Treasury. We have already sowed hundreds of millions of roubles in Asia, and have reaped war, sedition, hatred, and the necessity of further heavy sacrifices."

I have, &c.
A. NICOLSON.

[48068] No. 138.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(*Received December* 20.)

(No. 974.)
Sir, *Constantinople, December* 15, 1909.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 965 of the 13th instant, I have the honour to report that it is now announced that four Armenians, Kirkor, Nazaret, Bedros, and Mihran, together with Bishop Sahak, who had been condemned by the court-martial to hard labour for life and perpetual banishment, have been pardoned by the Sultan; and that further condemnations to death of authors of the massacres shall be commuted to hard labour for life. As regards the persons mentioned in the enclosure to Sir G. Lowther's despatch No. 769 of the 22nd September last, to whom reference was made in your No. 316 of the 7th October, the matter has been mentioned to the Minister of the Interior, but it would seem hopeless to expect any result so long as the Hilmi Cabinet, which was in power when the massacres occurred, cannot be induced, even under the pressure of the Armenian Patriarch's resignation, to adequately punish the

Vali of Adana, Jevad Bey, who was the responsible authority locally, as Hilmi Pasha was in the capital.

I have, &c.
CHARLES M. MARLING.

[44808] No. 139.

Foreign Office to Mr. R. Harmsworth, M.P.

Sir, *Foreign Office, December* 21, 1909.

I AM directed by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 16th ultimo respecting a concession for exploiting the oil-fields of Mesopotamia, and expressing the desire that you may have official support with a view to obtaining the concession.

I am to state that unless you can show that you, or a group of British financiers already formed of which you are a member, will undertake to work the concession if you should succeed in obtaining it, His Majesty's Government will not be able to support any application you may make at Constantinople for the concession.

I am, &c.
LOUIS MALLET.

[46723] No. 140.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 28.)

(No. 975.)

Sir, *Pera, December* 21, 1909.

AS a result of the interpellation of the 13th instant, on which I had the honour to report in my despatch No. 973 of the 14th instant, the question of the fusion of the English and Turkish steam-ship companies on the Tigris has entered on a new and, I fear, not very promising stage.

By accepting Halil Bey's motion, which binds them not to conclude any arrangement with the Euphrates and Tigris Company involving the Treasury in any liability except with the consent of Parliament, the Government have placed themselves in a very awkward dilemma. On the one hand, they have given His Majesty's Government repeated assurances that they will effect the fusion, an essential part of which is that adequate compensation will be given to the new company in case the navigability of the rivers is interfered with by the projected irrigation works; and, on the other, they cannot conclude a convention for the fusion containing this essential point without submitting the agreement to Parliament, and they assert that Parliament will never pass the convention if it includes compensation. They seem, in fact, to be between the devil and the deep sea, for if they fail to carry the fusion they are bound, by their promises to us, to resign, while if they complete the arrangement they believe that the Chamber will drive them from office.

As I reported in my despatch above mentioned, Mr. Lynch's representatives here informed the Government officially that they were willing to omit all mention of irrigation, with its possible result of impeding navigation, involving a claim for compensation, as they knew that Mr. Lynch is entirely convinced that in the event of the stoppage of navigation the Euphrates and Tigris Navigation has a valid claim for compensation, and that this right would, on the fusion of the two companies, devolve to the new company—if, indeed, it did not become stronger under the statutes of the new concern. They were led to believe—as I was myself—that the Government, by accepting this line of arrangement, would be able to conclude a convention in which no mention of compensation was made, and, if attacked in Parliament, defend the arrangement by asserting that it involved the Treasury in no new liability, but merely left untouched an existing but unrecognised claim.

However, when Mr. Whittall and Colonel Picot called on the Minister of Finance on the day following the interpellation they found his Excellency entirely averse from adopting this line; and, indeed, Javid Bey's declarations to the Chamber on the 11th that the Government did not recognise that the present Lynch company had any right to compensation did not seem to leave much hope that this solution could be adopted. I may mention here also that the Grand Vizier and the Minister for Foreign Affairs have both stated that they could not take this line.

Javid Bey, however, informed those gentlemen that the Government were quite persuaded that the proposed fusion was in the interests of the community, that they quite realised that the new company was entitled to compensation, and, indeed, could not come into existence without it, and that the Government would find a way to keep their promise to His Majesty's Government without violating the constitution or their engagement to the Chamber. Hulajian Effendi has also spoken to the same effect.

Various proposals have been put forward for escaping from the dilemma, but on examination all of them have been found defective, the most promising being a suggestion that, in the event of an irrigation company being formed to farm the works projected by Sir W. Willcocks, the Government would undertake to make it obligatory for them to indemnify the Navigation Company in case of the traffic on the rivers being stopped. The objection to this proposal is that it is at present the intention of the Government to keep the irrigation works in their own hands.

When I saw Rifaat Pasha yesterday I took the opportunity of pointing out to him very plainly that His Majesty's Government would certainly hold the Ministers to their engagement, and that, as we had no wish to see the present Government resign, I must urge on him the necessity of finding some issue of the *impasse* in which they had landed themselves. His Excellency said that the Government had every wish to act up to its assurances, but they had been pushed into a corner by the interpellation of the 11th instant, and had been absolutely compelled to yield to the sense of the House that any arrangement entailing any monetary liability must be submitted to Parliament. I said that from what I had heard I was pretty well convinced that on the 13th instant Ministers could have got the Chamber to accept the principle of compensation, for their supporters had then realised that they were risking their tenure of office, and were practically obliged to obey orders; it would, moreover, have been an excellent object-lesson in party discipline, and would have strengthened the hands of the Executive against the vexatious interference of the legislature. His Excellency demurred to this, and referred to the parlous position in which the Government had been on the first day of the debate.

Meanwhile the Bairam holidays, which last ten days, are close upon us, nothing can be done, and it is to be hoped that during this time the Government will devise some means of overcoming this difficulty. I must confess that I am not very sanguine, but Mr. Whittall thinks it not impossible that some acceptable combination may still be found.

I propose to take an early opportunity of seeing the Grand Vizier and impressing on him the necessity of redeeming his promises to us.

Colonel Picot left for England on the 20th instant.

I have, &c.
CHARLES M. MARLING.

[46724] No. 141.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 28.)

(No. 976.)

Sir, *Constantinople, December* 17, 1909.

ON receipt of your despatch No. 337 of the 27th October last, I caused enquiries to be made here regarding the alleged intention of the Turkish Government to create a petroleum *régie* in this country. Up to the present, I have been able to obtain no information in confirmation of the existence of any such intention on the part of the Turkish Government, nor has Mr. Nichols, the agent of the D'Arcy group, been able to hear anything of such a scheme at the Ministry of Mines. It appears to me inconceivable that so important a matter should not have been talked about and become known if the Government had serious intentions of creating a monopoly, and had gone so far as to make certain proposals to Mr. Lane's firm.

It is generally known that the Turkish Government hope to create certain monopolies, *i.e.*, on matches, petroleum, spirits, &c., but no steps have been taken up to the present to bring about negotiations, and had the Government shown any disposition to discuss these questions, they would most certainly by now have been overwhelmed with proposals from the Standard Oil Company and from Russian as well as from Roumanian companies.

Mr. Lane gives no particulars in the letter which forms the enclosure to your

despatch under reply, as to who is his agent here or as to whom he has been treating with, and he does not appear to me to be very serious.

With regard to Mr. Lane's references to the alleged intention of the Standard Oil Company to acquire interests in the Turkish Empire, I have the honour to enclose herewith a copy of a memorandum drawn up by Mr. Weakley, from which it may be seen that the Standard Oil Company have apparently no intention to ask for the monopoly of the sale of petroleum in the Empire, but are merely endeavouring to obtain municipal authorisation in various cities in this country to introduce the sale of petroleum in bulk.

I have, &c.
CHARLES M. MARLING.

Inclosure in No. 141.

Memorandum by Mr. Weakley respecting the Standard Oil Company's Operations in Turkey.

A MR. CAMPBELL, travelling agent of the Standard Oil Company, came to Constantinople nearly a year ago, and has since made frequent visits to Smyrna, Salonica, and has also been to Beirout. It has been ascertained that the object of his visit is connected with a scheme the Standard Oil Company have in view of developing the sale of American oil in this country.

In order to reduce the cost of petroleum and give facilities to the public, it is proposed to import oil in bulk, which will be stored in large tanks on the sea-shore. The oil will then be distributed and sold to the public by means of small iron tank carts, which are to circulate through the streets, and thus every householder will have the facility of purchasing the quantity of oil necessary for daily requirements at a moderate cost, instead of incurring the expense of buying the more costly petroleum, which is put up in tins.

It is understood that the Standard Oil Company have no intention of asking for the monopoly of sale of petroleum in the country, but are simply endeavouring to obtain the necessary authorisation which lies within the powers of municipal authorities to grant for introducing the sale of petroleum in bulk.

Mr. Campbell has been trying for some time past to obtain permission to commence work in Constantinople, but has not, so far, been able to make much headway. He had selected a convenient site for erecting oil tanks at Maerikeuy, one of the suburbs at Stamboul, on the Marmora. Owing, however, to the piece of land which he had chosen being in close proximity to the Government cartridge factories, the military authorities have strongly objected to its being used for the purpose of storing petroleum. No other convenient site on the sea-shore has so far been found, so that the scheme, as far as Constantinople is concerned, is at present at a standstill.

Mr. Campbell's negotiations with the municipal authorities at Smyrna seems to have been more successful, and it is reported that he has received permission for commencing work there. The site selected for the oil tanks is situated on the northern shore of the Gulf of Smyrna, and lies between the village of Cordelio and Agia Triada. Mr. Campbell seems sanguine that he can commence building tanks and the necessary jetties as soon as convenient. His efforts to obtain a suitable piece of ground at Salonica, as well as permission from the municipal authorities there, have hitherto been unsuccessful. Mr. Campbell is at present in Smyrna, where he is giving all his attention to the carrying out of his scheme in that town.

December 13, 1909.

[46725] No. 142.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 28.)

(No. 977.)

Sir, *Constantinople, December* 20, 1909.

WITH reference to Sir G. Lowther's despatch No. 852 of the 15th October, I have the honour to forward herewith a despatch from Mr. Richardson, His Majesty's vice-

consul at Camaran, reporting on the situation with regard to the Idrisee movement and the Arab revolt in the Tehama of El Yemen.

I have, &c.
CHARLES M. MARLING.

Inclosure in No. 142.

Vice-Consul Richardson to Mr. Marling.

(No. 23/E.)

Sir, *Camaran, November* 29, 1909.

SINCE submission to your Excellency from Jeddah at the beginning of last month of my report on the progress of the Arab revolt in the Tehama, and since my return to Hodeidah, the rebel tribesmen have practically shown no activity.

While there has been nothing very important to report in the way of fighting during the past two months, it has been difficult to understand what has actually been happening since the large force, consisting of about 7,000 regulars drawn from the Ist, IInd, IIIrd, and IVth Army Corps, and of nearly 4,000 recruits, has been landed at Hodeidah to deal with the revolt in the Yemen.

General Rifaat Pasha, who has fully 4,000 trained men under his command, and several guns, and who established his base at Loheia at the end of September, advanced on Zahra, some eight hours' march from his base, and has since occupied Zaidyia, that is, another eight hours' march northward, during the two months that have elapsed. He has met with no opposition whatever during his movements, most of the numerous sheikhs inhabiting the country round about immediately coming in to announce their submission.

The villages of other sheikhs and tribesmen that have not submitted voluntarily have been burned by the troops.

Communication between Hodeidah or Loheia and the districts of El-Hujjeh and El-Hujjur has been entirely cut off for the past three or four months, although it was expected that the strong force under Rifaat Pasha would have succeeded ere this in establishing the necessary communication.

Much dissatisfaction prevails at the inactivity shown by Rifaat Pasha in the country north of Hodeidah. The vilayet at the beginning of this month deputed the mutessarif of Hodeidah to visit Loheia to ascertain the real state of affairs existing and to report what Rifaat Pasha was doing.

Nedjib Pasha, the mutessarif, after a stay of seventeen days at Loheia, passed through Camaran last week on his way back to Hodeidah.

I inferred from a conversation that I had with his Excellency on board the Ottoman gun-boat "Naushahr" here that Rifaat Pasha, owing to incompetence and want of experience, is still inert at Zaidyia, whereas the force he has at his disposal is sufficiently strong to advance on El-Hujjur.

It would appear that the mutessarif, while at Loheia, summoned several sheikhs from the surrounding districts, from whom he learnt that the Seyyid Idrisee of Sabyeah was undoubtedly the instigator of the present rising, and that Arabs from Sabyeah were sent by him to assist the Wayidat tribesmen in investing the Turkish force at Zahra during the months of August and September last.

He (the mutessarif) succeeded, with the assistance of Sheikh Hadi-el-Haij, the chief of the Wayidat clans that inhabit the country between Zaidyia and El-Hujjur, and who has hitherto refused the repeated overtures of the Idrisee to join in the rebellion, in pushing up supplies to the garrison stationed at El-Hujjur.

There have been rumours afloat during the past few days that the troops under Rifaat Pasha will shortly make a forward movement and open up communication with both El-Hujjeh and El-Hujjur. While no actual encounters between the troops at the latter places and the tribesmen are reported to have taken place, it is known that the country intervening between the Zaidyia and the two above-mentioned districts is infested with armed bands of rebels.

As already reported, the Ottoman transport "Nedjat" and the ship "Ecaterinoslawl," of the Russian Volunteer fleet, disembarked at Hodeidah early in October 2,929 regulars under arms drawn from the first four army corps in Turkey for service in this vilayet.

The above-mentioned troops under Brigadier-General Saïd Pasha who also arrived from Constantinople at the same time were transported a week later in the ships "Hurriet" and "Nedjat" to Cumfuda, to be utilised to quell the rebellion in the

province of Assyr and to advance later from Abha the capital on Sabyeah, the Idrisee's head-quarters.

The sheikhs in the vicinity and those residing in the interior were invited to come down and meet Saïd Pasha on his arrival at Cumfuda, but refused to do so on the ground that in the absence of substantial assurances to the contrary, they feared they would be detained or imprisoned on coming in. The authorities then requested that no obstacles be placed in the way of the troops during their march towards Abha the capital, to which the tribesmen replied that their instructions from Seyyid Mahomed-el-Idrisee were to oppose the advance of troops, but not to molest trade caravans.

Makhail, a military outpost between Cumfuda and Abha, that had been captured early in September, still remains in the hands of the rebels; and the capital, though not actually besieged, has since been cut off from communication with the coast.

When he first landed at Hodeidah, General Saïd Pasha met a certain Abdurrahman Bey Ilias and a khoja named Tewfik, who produced credentials from the Ministry of the Interior, charging them to proceed to Sabyeah on a special mission to Seyyid Mahomed-el-Idrisee.

Abdurrahman Bey is an Arab by birth and the son of an Arab Pasha who is a native of Medina, where he is resident.

The Khoja Tewfik was a fellow student of the Idrisee's at the Azhar University in Cairo, and is well known to the Seyyid.

The two men above referred to have since their arrival visited the Idrisee, who received them hospitably. They report that the Seyyid, who simply professes to be a man of piety and learning, disclaims all connection with the recent revolt and the present unrest in the Tehama of northern Yemen. According to them, the Seyyid even denies that he has ever instigated the sheikhs and tribes to rise, but, on the contrary, he avers that since his return to Yemen from Egypt about three years ago, his energies have been diverted towards putting a stop to inter-tribal warfare in his locality and the amicable and peaceful settlement of disputes between the Arabs and their sheikhs, when referred to his arbitration.

They (the special deputies) state that Seyyid Idrisee attributes the present trouble principally to the oppression exercised by Boni Pasha in the Zaidyia district and to that of other prominent Arabs in their respective spheres of influence in the Tehama belt, as also to the maladministration of the present Governor-General of the Yemen and the mutessarif of Hodeidah, and lastly to the abuses still carried on in the cazas and cantons in the lowlands of the Yemen by the civil administrative officials.

The above-mentioned Abdurrahman Bey Ilias, on conclusion of his visit to Sabyeah, left for Constantinople to communicate the result of his mission to the Ministry of the Interior.

Khoja Tewfik proceeded from Sabyeah to Cumfuda and informed Saïd Pasha of his interview with the Idrisee, adding that the latter expressed a wish to meet him.

General Saïd Pasha thereupon left his force at Cumfuda, and accompanied by two officers and the khoja proceeded in the gun-boat "Custumuni" to Geezan. The Seyyid, accompanied by 700 armed followers (according to the mutessarif's account he was attended by over 5,000 armed Bedouins) arrived and encamped at a place about twenty minutes' walk outside the town of Geezan. Liwa Saïd Pasha, with his staff, and the khoja proceeded thither and interviewed the Pretender. The latter depicted to the general the sad state of affairs existing in this province under the administration of the vali, Hassan Tahsin Pasha, and the mutessarif of Hodeidah, Nedjib Pasha, and complained of the oppression exercised and the abuses practised by several prominent Arab sheikhs, recognised by the local authorities in various places, in the sense already reported by the two special deputies.

Seyyid Idrisee therefore advised the pasha to ask the central authorities at Constantinople to dismiss the above-mentioned Turkish officials and to cause the removal of certain undesirable notables named by him. He further assured Saïd Pasha that should this be done, he (the Seyyid) would answer in future for any breach of tranquility in the Tehama throughout the Yemen.

It would also appear that the Idrisee stated his willingness to Saïd Pasha to accompany the troops from Cumfuda to Abha and to facilitate their march *en route* as a proof of his loyalty to the Ottoman Government and of his good faith.

After his interview with Seyyid Idrisee, Saïd Pasha returned to Hodeidah, which he reached on the 8th instant, and has been since occupied in communicating with the Ministry of the Interior and the Grand Vizierate.

It is expected that a commission will shortly be dispatched from Constantinople to the Yemen to investigate the present state of affairs and to examine the disparity of the reports submitted to the central Government by the local authorities on the one hand,

and those sent by the special deputies and Saïd Pasha on the other. The latter, it might be mentioned, besides being appointed to command the expedition in Assyr, was delegated to report on the situation.

I visited Saïd Pasha on board the gun-boat "Custumuni" here before he sailed for Geezan and Cumfuda yesterday morning.

I learnt from a conversation I had with him and the Khoja Tewfik that they firmly believed the Seyyid Idrisee to be a good man and absolutely unconnected with the recent rising in the Tehama, and not at all responsible for the acts of the sheikhs and tribesmen that participated therein.

Saïd Pasha informed me that he was going to advance almost immediately from Cumfuda on Abha and thence return to Geezan viâ Sabyeah. Although the general was reticent on the point when referred to by me, it is an open secret that he intends to call at Geezan and embark the Idrisee, who previously offered to accompany the troops in their advance on Abha.

It is doubtful, however, whether the Seyyid will now fulfil his promise or consent to embark on an Ottoman ship of war.

It is indeed difficult to reconcile oneself to the divergent views held by General Saïd Pasha from those of the vali of the province and of the mutessarif of Hodeidah with reference to the responsibility of Seyyid Mahomed Idrisee in the recent outbreak in the Tehama.

In their communications with the central Government, the local authorities have strongly insisted, in the interests of peace and the future welfare of the province, that the rebellious tribesmen be severely punished and the Seyyid arrested and banished from the country. They are of opinion that these measures can be easily applied and executed with the force now at their disposal. They assert with equal force that they have clear and infallible evidence to prove the Seyyid's complicity in the late insurrection.

General Saïd Pasha, on the other hand, who has refused to treat with the local vilayet on the subject, has recommended to Constantinople a policy of leniency and conciliation towards the tribesmen, and advocates the acceptance of the proffered good offices of the Seyyid Idrisee towards the establishment of tranquility.

I am personally acquainted with General Saïd Pasha, who has served previously in this vilayet and has a very good record. He is known to be a conscientious official and a brave, experienced, and capable commander, but I must admit that I find it difficult to accept his views.

It is possible that he has been entirely misled by the Seyyid Idrisee, but there is an even chance of my being wrong in such a supposition.

The mutessarif of Hodeidah corroborated the information received by me as furnished in this despatch with reference to the interviews between the deputies and Saïd Pasha respectively and the Pretender.

His Excellency explained that the Seyyid demanded the dismissal of the vali and himself, because his impostures were too well known to them.

It will be remembered that the governor-general at the commencement of the revolt issued a proclamation in Arabic, which he circulated widely amongst the Arabs in the Tehama, denouncing the Idrisee as a sorcerer and a fraud, and warning the inhabitants against being led away by his deceitful promises.

At the same time, when he saw that the town of Hodeidah was in danger of falling to the onslaught of the Seyyid's adherent, the governor, with the assistance of Seyyid Ahmed Pasha Es-Sherai, an Arab notable and Mayor of Hodeidah, summoned the sheikhs of El-Khora, El-Jurabi, El-Absia, and others occupying the country in the vicinity, and made a compact with them by which the latter promised faithfully to oppose the movements of the Idrisee's bands in their respective territories, and also to assist the authorities in case of necessity. The mutessarif points out that the latter action alone saved the town of Hodeidah from being captured, as the Ottoman garrison at the time was inadequate to protect it against the rebels.

It is apparent from the explanation given by the mutessarif, and there is no doubt that it contains some truth, that the Idrisee demands the dismissal of officials who were instrumental in cutting short the movement attributed to him, and the removal of those sheikhs and Arab notables that refused to make common cause with him in the upheaval of the past few months.

The near future or time alone will help to clear the mystery overclouding the political horizon in this eventful quarter of the Ottoman Empire.

With truth and the greatest respect, I have, &c.

G. A. RICHARDSON.

[46728] No. 143.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 28.)

(No. 980. Confidential.)

Sir, *Constantinople, December 19, 1909.*

IN continuation of my despatch No. 953 of the 7th instant, I have the honour to transmit to you herewith copy of a further despatch from His Majesty's vice-consul at Mosul on the situation of the Nestorian community at Elkosh and their desire to be allowed to revert to their original church.

I have twice brought this matter to the attention of the Porte, but as it is one of internal administration, I have not thought it consistent with our general attitude towards the new order of things in Turkey to speak with any insistence. There is also another reason for acting with more circumspection in this case.

It appears from Mr Young's own account, and more particularly from a private letter written in October last, that the French vice-consul has been giving, if not actual support, at all events unofficial countenance to the Catholic Chaldæan Patriarch in his dealings with these Nestorians; the French Embassy, on the other hand, assures me that they have intimated to their consular officers and missionaries the undesirability of doing anything savouring of religious propaganda, so that in all probability the French vice-consul has not, any more than Mr. Young, exceeded the spirit of his instructions; but again, he is, I gather, disposed to think that his British colleague's advocacy of the cause of the Elkosh villagers is open to criticism, from which we may infer that the two consuls do not see the matter in quite the same light. In the circumstances, if this embassy took too strong a line in urging the complaints of these people on the attention of the Porte, there would be a danger of creating the regrettable impression that a certain amount of religious rivalry exists between ourselves and the French. I am sending a copy of this despatch to Mr. Young for his guidance, and am also reminding him of Lord Dufferin's circular of the 25th December, 1883, prohibiting His Majesty's consular officers from receiving petitions from Ottoman subjects.

I have, &c.
CHARLES M. MARLING.

Inclosure in No. 143.

Vice-Consul Wilkie Young to Mr. Marling.

(No. 30. Confidential.)

Sir, *Mosul, November 28, 1908.*

WITH reference to previous despatches on the subject of the Nestorian movement of Elkosh, I have the honour to report the following:—

During the past three months the Roman Catholic Chaldæan Bishop Stepan (who is acting for the Patriarch during the latter's absence in Europe) has been making every effort by threats, bribes, and persecution to check the movement and force those who have repudiated the authority of the Chaldæan Patriarchate to return to their allegiance. To-day I hear that Bishop Stepan has succeeded (by threatening to hand him over to the authorities for military service) in inducing a certain priest of the name of Yusef, who was one of the leaders of the Nestorian movement and signed various petitions addressed to the local authorities and to this vice-consulate, not only to return to the Chaldæan Church, but to sign a statement to the effect that "he had been induced to go over to the Nestorian heresy by the influence and bribes of the British dragoman, Mr. Nimrad Rousam," and implying that "the whole of this Nestorian movement of Elkosh had been worked up by the consulate with the ultimate purpose of establishing a British protectorate over the district in question" (*sic*). I am told that the "statement" (which seems to have been read by the vali and administrative council sitting with closed doors) also contains an intimation to the effect that the writer has further information of a highly important and confidential nature which he is prepared to submit to the local authorities by word of mouth.

The above information has just been given me by a member of the council in the strictest confidence, and I have no reason to doubt its substantial accuracy.

As regards the statement of the priest Yusef, it appears (as reported to me) so utterly ridiculous that, even if it had originated from a less questionable source, it

would hardly deserve attention. Nevertheless, it seems as well to report the incident to your Excellency for two reasons, viz. (1) because it is conceivably not impossible that some reference to it may be made by the local authorities in their correspondence with Constantinople, and (2) because it is an admirable instance of the methods adopted by the Chaldæan priests in their efforts to choke a movement detrimental to their interests.

As the mail is just leaving and I am compelled to write this myself, I regret that there is no time to make a duplicate, which, however, shall be forwarded by the next post.

I have, &c.
H. WILKIE YOUNG.

[46729] No. 144.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 28.)

(No. 981.)

Sir, *Constantinople, December 21, 1909.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 974 of the 15th instant, I have the honour to report that the executions in connection with the Adana massacres last spring have not ceased as was expected. His Majesty's vice-consul at Adana informs me that at Erzin fifteen further executions took place on the 18th December, among the condemned being one Armenian, who is thought to be the murderer of the Circassian chief, Aislan Bey (see Sir G. Lowther's despatch No. 796 of the 29th September last).

I have, &c.
CHARLES M. MARLING.

[46731] No. 145.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 28.)

(No. 983.)

Sir, *Constantinople, December 20, 1909.*

SINCE writing my despatch No. 923 of the 19th November, I have twice spoken to the Minister of Foreign Affairs on the subject of the proposed money order service between Bahrein and the Turkish Empire, and I have been informed by his Excellency that neither in his own department nor from the Ottoman postal administration could he learn anything of the matter. I again reverted to the subject to-day, and at Rifaat Pasha's request I am giving him a short written memorandum of the case.

I have, &c.
CHARLES M. MARLING.

[46733] No. 146.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 28.)

(No. 985.)

Sir, *Constantinople, December 21, 1909.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 974 of the 15th instant, I have the honour to forward herewith a despatch from the acting vice-consul at Adana, reporting on the recent execution of twenty-five Moslems in connection with the massacres of last spring.

I have, &c.
CHARLES M. MARLING.

Inclosure in No. 146.

Acting Vice-Consul Chafy to Sir G. Lowther.

N. 19.)

Sir, *Adana, December 15, 1909.*

I HAVE the honour to supplement the brief messages I telegraphed on the 11th, 12th, and 13th December by the following account of the recent executions at Adana:—

On Saturday, the 11th December, fourteen Moslems were hanged at daybreak. The gallows were erected in the cotton market in the centre of the town. The bodies were exposed for about two hours, and then given up to their relations and friends for burial. The funerals in the Turkish cemetery just outside the town attracted large crowds. Their attitude was one of surprised and surly indignation. No untoward incident occurred. The military commandant had taken full precautions. Some women screamed insults and reproaches, and the not unnatural question was being asked on all sides: "Why did you order us to kill, and now hang us?"

His Majesty's armoured cruiser "Aboukir" arrived in Mersina unexpectedly on the 10th instant, and Captain Phillimore and staff, knowing nothing of the executions, arrived in Adana an hour or two after their completion to pay official visits to the local authorities.

I drove with them from the vice-consulate to the konak. We were provided with a mounted escort and a guard of honour, and accorded a ceremonious welcome. Large crowds lined the streets, and it is interesting that though, or perhaps because, the English were supposed to have brought about the hangings, our progress through the town was greeted with a remarkable show of respect. Captain Phillimore took occasion to express his approval to the vali of the act of justice so dexterously accomplished. After receiving the return visits of the vali and the military commandant at the vice-consulate, he left with his party to rejoin his ship at Mersina.

On Sunday, the 12th, eleven more Moslems were hung as before at daybreak. This time the place of execution was an open space at the outer end of the old Roman bridge spanning the river. The inner or town end was guarded by soldiers, who prevented the access of sightseers. The vali patrolled the streets in a carriage accompanied by a single companion, and unattended by his usual mounted escort. The attitude of the crowds was now far more menacing. Bitter words flew fast, and it is said that not a few were addressed to the vali personally. In any country but Turkey rioting would have been certain. But this is Turkey. The Government had firmly declared its will, and the population bowed to that of Allah.

Captain Phillimore, who had wired the news of the hangings to head-quarters, received a wireless telegram from the admiral at Malta asking whether I considered the presence of the "Aboukir" at Mersina necessary to protect Adana from possible disturbances. I replied in the negative, and the "Aboukir" sailed, as arranged, on Monday evening.

Not the slightest disorder has occurred. On Sunday the captain of a German war-ship came from Mersina to pay official visits to Adana. It is now commonly thought here that the hangings were the result of a naval demonstration.

The excitement of the population continued till Monday, when, according to a report which I have not yet had time to verify, the military commandant read in the prison an answer to hurried protests sent to Constantinople from the friends and relations of the condemned stating that the remaining death sentences were commuted. Whether this is strictly true or not I cannot yet say. In any case, the population is now completely appeased, and I understand that the fifteen wooden tripods constructed for the first executions six months ago have been ostentatiously burnt in front of the konak.

Adana has now resumed its usual aspect of a sleepy provincial town.

So much for the manner of the executions. Your Excellency will require no local comment on their political aspect. I can only remark that, with the exception of such persons as the infamous brothers Kibaranoglou, who planned and effected the massacre of a whole Christian village, none of those now hung can be justly accused of being the real authors of the massacre.

The authorities inform me that the courts-martial are to be re-empanelled, and that certain sentences, such as that of a certain Kerim Aga and Geukderelian, mentioned in my last despatch, are to be revised.

As far as I can as yet ascertain no other executions besides these twenty-five have taken place in this vilayet. It is therefore presumable that the Armenians (if any) who were reported to be awaiting execution will now escape.

Along with that of the twenty-five hangings the official "Gazette" of Adana contains the announcement of a score of terms of imprisonment awarded to Moslems implicated in the massacres. These sentences range from three months to fifteen years.

I will withhold further details on this subject in order to catch the first mail.

I have, &c.

R. E. W. CHAFY.

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